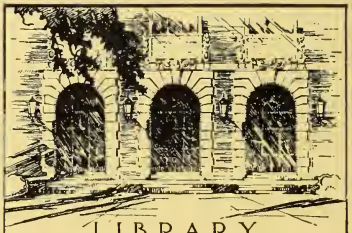

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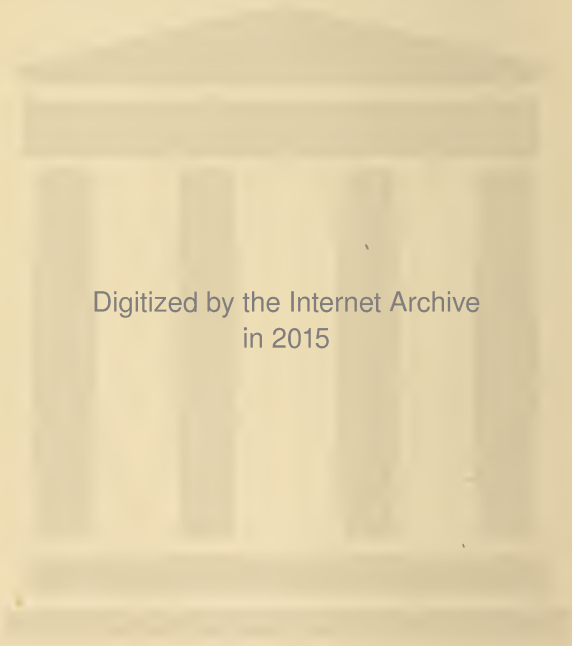

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Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verses

Edinburgh de Luxe Edition

The Works of

Rudyard Kipling

The Vampire

Photogravure by John Andrew & Son after original by Burne-Jones

The Edinburgh Society

Boston — London

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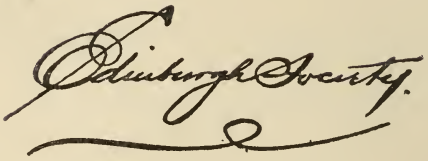

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THE BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

Oh East is East, and West is West, and never
the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's
great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West Border,
nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, tho'
they come from the ends of the earth!

KAMAL is out with twenty men to raise the
Border side,
And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is the
Colonel's pride:
He has lifted her out of the stable-door be-
tween the dawn and the day,
And turned the calkins upon her feet, and rid-
den her far away.
Then up and spoke the Colonel's son that led a
troop of the Guides:
"Is there never a man of all my men can say
where Kamal hides?"
Then up and spoke Mahommed Khan, the son
of the Ressaldar,

"If ye know the track of the morning-mist, ye know where his pickets are.
"At dusk he harries the Abazai—at dawn he is into Bonair,
"But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own place to fare,
"So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a bird can fly,
"By the favor of God ye may cut him off, ere he win to the Tongue of Jagai,
"But if he be passed the Tongue of Jagai, right swiftly turn ye then,
"For the length and the breadth of that grisly plain is sown with Kamal's men.
"There is rock to the left, and rock to the right, and low, lean thorn between,
"And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick where never a man is seen."
The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a raw rough dun was he,
With the mouth of a bell and the heart of Hell, and the head of the gallows-tree.
The Colonel's son to the Fort has won, they bid him stay to eat—
Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he sits not long at his meat.
He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast as he can fly,

Till he was aware of his father's mare in the
gut of the Tongue of Jagai,
Till he was aware of his father's mare with
Kamal upon her back,
And when he could spy the white of her eye, he
made the pistol crack.
He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the
whistling ball went wide.
"Ye shoot like a soldier," Kamal said. "Show
now if ye can ride."
It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as blown
dust-devils go,
The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the mare
like a barren doe.
The dun he leaned against the bit and slugged
his head above,
But the red mare played with the snaffle-bars,
as a maiden plays with a glove.
There was rock to the left and rock to the
right, and low lean thorn between,
And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick tho'
never a man was seen.
They have ridden the low moon out of the sky,
their hoofs drum up the dawn,
The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the
mare like a new-roused fawn.
The dun he fell at a water-course—in a woful
heap fell he,

And Kamal has turned the red mare back, and pulled the rider free.
He has knocked the pistol out of his hand—small room was there to strive,
" 'Twas only by favor of mine," quoth he, "ye rode so long alive:
"There was not a rock for twenty mile, there was not a clump of tree,
"But covered a man of my own men with his rifle cocked on his knee.
"If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have held it low,
"The little jackals that flee so fast, were feasting all in a row:
"If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I have held it high,
"The kite that whistles above us now were gorged till she could not fly."
Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "Do good to bird and beast,
"But count who come for the broken meats before thou makest a feast.
"If there should follow a thousand swords to carry my bones away,
"Belike the price of a jackal's meal were more than a thief could pay.
"They will feed their horse on the standing crop, their men on the garnered grain,

"The thatch of the byres will serve their fires
when all the cattle are slain.
"But if thou thinkest the price be fair,—thy
brethren wait to sup,
"The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn,—howl,
dog, and call them up!
"And if thou thinkest the price be high, in
steer and gear and stack,
"Give me my father's mare again, and I'll fight
my own way back!"
Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set
him upon his feet.
"No talk shall be of dogs," said he, "when
wolf and grey wolf meet.
"May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in deed
or breath;
"What dam of lances brought thee forth to
jest at the dawn with Death?"
Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "I hold
by the blood of my clan:
"Take up the mare for my father's gift—by
God, she has carried a man!"
The red mare ran to the Colonel's son, and
nuzzled against his breast,
"We be two strong men," said Kamal then,
"but she loveth the younger best.
"So she shall go with a lifter's dower, my tur-
quoise-studded rein,
"My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and
silver stirrups twain."

The Colonel's son a pistol drew and held it muzzle-end,
"Ye have taken the one from a foe," said he; "will ye take the mate from a friend?"
"A gift for a gift," said Kamal straight; "a limb for the risk of a limb.
"Thy father has sent his son to me, I'll send my son to him!"
With that he whistled his only son, that dropped from a mountain-crest—
He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he looked like a lance in rest.
"Now here is thy master," Kamal said, "who leads a troop of the Guides,
"And thou must ride at his left side as shield on shoulder rides.
"Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and board and bed,
"Thy life is his—thy fate is to guard him with thy head.
"So thou must eat the White Queen's meat, and all her foes are thine,
"And thou must harry thy father's hold for the peace of the Border-line,
"And thou must make a trooper tough and hack thy way to power—
"Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar when I am hanged in Peshawur."

They have looked each other between the eyes,
and there they have found no fault,
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
Blood on leavened bread and salt;
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
Blood on fire and fresh-cut sod,
On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber knife,
and the Wondrous Names of God.
The Colonel's son he rides the mare and
Kamal's boy the dun,
And two have come back to Fort Bukloh
where there went forth but one.
And when they drew to the Quarter-Guard,
full twenty swords flew clear—
There was not a man but carried his feud with
the blood of the mountaineer.
"Ha' done! ha' done!" said the Colonel's son,
"Put up the steel at your sides!
"Last night ye had struck at a Border thief—
to-night 'tis a man of the Guides!"

Oh East is East and West is West, and never
the two shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's
great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border,
nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, tho'
they come from the ends of the earth.

THE LAST SUTTEE

Not many years ago a King died in one of the Rajpoot States. His wives, disregarding the orders of the English against suttee, *would have broken out of the palace had not the gates been barred. But one of them, disguised as the King's favorite dancing-girl, passed through the line of guards and reached the pyre. There, her courage failing, she prayed her cousin, a baron of the court, to kill her. This he did, not knowing who she was.*

Udai Chand lay sick to death
In his hold by Gungra hill.
All night we heard the death-gongs ring
For the soul of the dying Rajpoot King,
All night beat up from the women's wing
A cry that we could not still.

All night the barons came and went,
The lords of the outer guard:
All night the cressets glimmered pale
On Ulwar sabre and Tonk jezail,
Mewar headstall and Marwar mail,
That clinked in the palace yard.

In the Golden room on the palace roof
All night he fought for air:
And there was sobbing behind the screen,
Rustle and whisper of women unseen,
And the hungry eyes of the Boondi Queen
On the death she might not share.

He passed at dawn—the death-fire leaped
From ridge to river-head,
From the Malwa plains to the Abu scaurs:
And wail upon wail went up to the stars
Behind the grim zenana-bars,
When they knew that the King was dead.

The dumb priest knelt to tie his mouth
And robe him for the pyre.
The Boondi Queen beneath us cried:
"See, now, that we die as our mothers died
"In the bridal-bed by our master's side!
"Out, women!—to the fire!"

We drove the great gates home apace:
White hands were on the sill:
But ere the rush of the unseen feet
Had reached the turn to the open street,
The bars shot down, the guard-drum beat—
We held the dove-cot still.

A face looked down in the gathering day,
And laughing spoke from the wall:
"Ohé, they mourn here: let me by—
"Azizun, the Lucknow nautch-girl, I?
"When the house is rotten, the rats must fly,
"And I seek another thrall.

"For I ruled the King as ne'er did Queen,—
"To-night the Queens rule me!
"Guard them safely, but let me go,
"Or ever they pay the debt they owe
"In scourge and torture!" She leaped below,
And the grim guard watched her flee.

They knew that the King had spent his soul
On a North-bred dancing-girl:
That he prayed to a flat-nosed Lucknow god,
And kissed the ground where her feet had trod
And doomed to death at her drunken nod
And swore by her lightest curl.

We bore the King to his fathers' place,
Where the tombs of the Sun-born stand:
Where the grey apes swing, and the peacocks preen
On fretted pillar and jeweled screen,
And the wild boar couch in the house of the Queen
On the drift of the desert sand.

The herald read his titles forth,
We set the logs aglow:
"Friend of the English, free from fear,
"Baron of Luni to Jeysulmeer,
"Lord of the Desert of Bikaneer,
"King of the Jungle,—go!"

All night the red flame stabbed the sky,
With wavering wind-tossed spears:
And out of a shattered temple crept
A woman who veiled her head and wept,
And called on the King—but the great King slept,
And turned not for her tears.

Small thought had he to mark the strife—
Cold fear with hot desire—
When thrice she leaped from the leaping flame,
And thrice she beat her breast for shame,
And thrice like a wounded dove she came
And moaned about the fire.

One watched, a bow-shot from the blaze,
The silent streets between,
Who had stood by the King in sport and fray,
To blade in ambush or boar at bay,
And he was a baron old and grey,
And kin to the Boondi Queen.

He said: "O shameless, put aside
"The veil upon thy brow!
"Who held the King and all his land
"To the wanton will of a harlot's hand!
"Will the white ash rise from the blistered brand?
"Stoop down, and call him now!"

Then she: "By the faith of my tarnished soul,
"All things I did not well
"I had hoped to clear ere the fire died,
"And lay me down by my master's side
"To rule in Heaven his only bride,
"While the others howl in Hell.

"But I have felt the fire's breath,
"And hard it is to die!
"Yet if I may pray a Rajpoot lord
"To sully the steel of a Thakur's sword
"With base-born blood of a trade abhorred"—
And the Thakur answered, "Ay."

He drew and struck: the straight blade drank
The life beneath the breast.
"I had looked for the Queen to face the flame,
"But the harlot dies for the Rajpoot dame—
"Sister of mine, pass, free from shame.
"Pass with thy King to rest!"

The black log crashed above the white:
The little flames and lean,
Red as slaughter and blue as steel,
That whistled and fluttered from head to heel,
Leaped up anew, for they found their meal
On the heart of—the Boondi Queen!

THE BALLAD OF THE KING'S MERCY

Abdhur Rahman the Durani Chief, of him is the story told.
His mercy fills the Khyber hills—his grace is manifold;
He has taken toll of the North and the South—his glory reacheth far,
And they tell the tale of his charity from Balkh to Kandahar.

Before the old Peshawur Gate, where Kurd and Kaffir meet,
The Governor of Kabul dealt the Justice of the Street,
And that was strait as running noose and swift as plunging knife,
Tho' he who held the longer purse might hold the longer life.

There was a hound of Hindustan had struck a Euzufzai,
Wherefore they spat upon his face and led him out to die.

It chanced the King went forth that hour when
throat was bared to knife;
The Kaffir groveled under-hoof and clamored
for his life.
Then said the King: "Have hope, O friend!
Yea, Death disgraced is hard;
"Much honor shall be thine"; and called the
Captain of the Guard,
Yar Khan, a bastard of the Blood, so city-bab-
ble saith,
And he was honored of the King—the which
is salt to Death;
And he was son of Daoud Shah the Reiver of
the Plains,
And blood of old Durani Lords ran fire in his
veins;
And 'twas to tame an Afghan pride nor Hell
nor Heaven could bind,
The King would make him butcher to a yelp-
ing cur of Hind.
"Strike!" said the King. "King's blood art
thou—his death shall be his pride!"
Then louder, that the crowd might catch:
"Fear not—his arms are tied!"
Yar Khan drew clear the Khyber knife, and
struck, and sheathed again.
"O man, thy will is done," quoth he; "A King
this dog hath slain."

Abdhur Rahman, the Durani Chief, to the North and the South is sold.
The North and the South shall open their mouth to a Ghilzai flag unrolled,
When the big guns speak to the Khyber peak, and his dog-Heratis fly,
Ye have heard the song — How long? How long? Wolves of the Abazai!

That night before the watch was set, when all the streets were clear,
The Governor of Kabul spoke: "My King, hast thou no fear?
"Thou knowest — thou hast heard," — his speech died at his master's face.
And grimly said the Afghan King: "I rule the Afghan race.
"My path is mine—see thou to thine—to-night upon thy bed
"Think who there be in Kabul now that clamor for thy head."

That night when all the gates were shut to City and to Throne,
Within a little garden-house the King lay down alone.
Before the sinking of the moon, which is the Night of Night,

Yar Khan came softly to the King to make his honor white.
The children of the town had mocked beneath his horse's hoofs,
The harlots of the town had hailed him "butcher!" from their roofs.
But as he groped against the wall, two hands upon him fell,
The King behind his shoulder spoke: "Dead man, thou dost not well!
" 'Tis ill to jest with Kings by day and seek a boon by night;
"And that thou bearest in thy hand is all too sharp to write.
"But three days hence, if God be good, and if thy strength remain,
"Thou shalt demand one boon of me and bless me in thy pain.
" For I am merciful to all, and most of all to thee,
"My butcher of the shambles, rest—no knife hast thou for me!"

Abdhur Rahman, the Durani Chief, holds hard by the South and the North;
But the Ghilzai knows, ere the melting snows, when the swollen banks break forth,

When the red-coats crawl to the sungar wall, and his Usbeg lances fail.
Ye have heard the song—How long? How long? Wolves of the Zuka Kheyl!

They stoned him in rubbish-field when dawn was in the sky,
According to the written word, "See that he do not die."

They stoned him till the stones were piled above him on the plain,
And those the laboring limbs displaced they tumbled back again.

One watched beside the dreary mound that veiled the battered thing,
And him the King with laughter called the Herald of the King.

It was upon the second night, the night of Ramazan,
The watcher leaning earthward heard the message of Yar Khan.

From shattered breast through shriveled lips broke forth the rattling breath;
"Creature of God, deliver me from agony of Death."

They sought the King among his girls, and
risked their lives thereby:
"Protector of the Pitiful, give orders that he
die!"

"Bid him endure until the day," a lagging an-
swer came;
"The night is short, and he can pray and learn
to bless my name."

Before the dawn three times he spoke, and on
the day once more:
"Creature of God, deliver me and bless the
King therefore!"

They shot him at the morning prayer, to ease
him of his pain,
And when he heard the matchlocks clink, he
blessed the King again.

Which thing the singers made a song for all
the world to sing,
So that the Outer Seas may know the mercy
of the King.

Abdhur Rahman, the Durani Chief, of him is the story told.

He has opened his mouth to the North and the South, they have stuffed his mouth with gold.
Ye know the truth of his tender ruth—and sweet his favors are.
Ye have heard the song—How long? How long? from Balkh to Kandahar.

THE BALLAD OF THE KING'S JEST

WHEN springtime flushes the desert grass,
Our kafilas wind through the Khyber Pass.
Lean are the camels but fat the frails,
Light are the purses but heavy the bales,
As the snowbound trade of the North comes down
To the market-square of Peshawur town.

In a tourquoise twilight, crisp and chill,
A kafila camped at the foot of the hill.
Then blue smoke-haze of the cooking rose,
And tentpeg answered to hammer-nose;
And the picketed ponies shag and wild,
Strained at their ropes as the feed was piled;
And the bubbling camels beside the load
Sprawled for a furlong adown the road;
And the Persian pussy-cats, brought for sale,
Spat at the dogs from the camel-bale;
And the tribesmen bellowed to hasten the food;
And the camp-fires twingled by Fort Jumrood;

And there fled on the wings of the gathering
dusk
A savor of camels and carpets and musk,
A murmur of voices, a reek of smoke,
To tell us the trade of the Khyber woke.
The lid of the flesh-pot chattered high,
The knives were whetted, and—then came I
To Mahbub Ali, the muleteer,
Patching his bridles and counting his gear,
Crammed with the gossip of half a year.
But Mahbub Ali the kindly said,
"Better is speech when the belly is fed."
So we plunged the hand to the mid-wrist deep
In a cinnamon stew of the fat-tailed sheep,
And he who never hath tasted the food,
By Allah! he knoweth not bad from good.

We cleansed our beards of the mutton-grease,
We lay on the mats and were filled with peace,
And the talk slid north, and the talk slid south,
With the sliding puffs from the hookah-mouth.
Four things greater than all things are,—
Women and Horses and Power and War.
We spake of them all, but the last the most,
For I sought a word of a Russian post,
Of a shifty promise, an unsheathed sword
And a grey-coat guard on the Helmund ford.
Then Mahbub Ali lowered his eyes

In the fashion of one who is weaving lies.
Quoth he: "Of the Russians who can say?
"When the night is gathering all is grey.
"But we look that the gloom of the night shall die
"In the morning flush of a blood-red sky.
"Friend of my heart, is it meet or wise
"To warn a King of his enemies?
"We know what Heaven or Hell may bring,
"But no man knoweth the mind of the King.
"That unsought counsel is cursed of God
"Attesteth the story of Wali Dad.

"His sire was leaky of tongue and pen,
"His dam was a clucking Khuttuck hen;
"And the colt bred close to the vice of each,
"For he carried the curse of an unstaunched speech.
"Therewith madness—so that he sought
"The favor of kings at the Kabul court;
"And traveled, in hope of honor, far
"To the line where the grey-coat squadrons are.
"There have I journeyed too—but I
"Saw naught, said naught, and—did not die!
"He hearked to rumor, and snatched at a breath
"Of 'this one knoweth' and 'that one saith,'—

"Legends that ran from mouth to mouth
"Of a grey-coat coming, and sack of the South.
"These have I also heard—they pass
"With each new spring and the winter grass.

"Hot-foot, southward, forgotten of God,
"Back to the city ran Wali Dad,
"Even to Kabul—in full durbar
"The King held talk with his Chief in War.
"Into the press of the crowd he broke,
"And what he had heard of the coming spoke.

"Then Gholam Hyder, the Red Chief, smiled,
"As a mother might on a babbling child;
"But those who would laugh restrained their breath,
"When the face of the King showed dark as death.
"Evil it is in full durbar
"To cry to a ruler of gathering war!
"Slowly he led to a peach-tree small,
"That grew by a cleft of the city wall.
"And he said to the boy: 'They shall praise thy zeal
" 'So long as the red spurt follows the steel.
" 'And the Russ is upon us even now?
" 'Great is thy prudence—await them, thou.

" 'Watch from the tree. Thou art young and
strong,
" 'Surely thy vigil is not for long.
" 'The Russ is upon us, thy clamor ran?
" 'Surely an hour shall bring their van.
" 'Wait and watch. When the host is near,
" 'Shout aloud that my men may hear.'

"Friend of my heart, is it meet or wise
"To warn a King of his enemies?
"A guard was set that he might not flee—
"A score of bayonets ringed the tree.
"The peach-bloom fell in showers of snow,
"When he shook at his death as he looked
below.
"By the power of God, who alone is great,
"Till the seventh day he fought with his fate.
"Then madness took him, and men declare
"He mowed in the branches as ape and bear,
"And last as a sloth, ere his body failed,
"And he hung as a bat in the forks, and
wailed,
"And sleep the cord of his hands untied,
"And he fell, and was caught on the points and
died.

"Heart of my heart, is it meet or wise
"To warn a King of his enemies?

"We know what Heaven or Hell may bring,
"But no man knoweth the mind of the King.
"Of the grey-coat coming who can say?
"When the night is gathering all is grey.
"Two things greater than all things are,
"The first is Love, and the second War.
"And since we know not how War may prove,
"Heart of my heart, let us talk of Love!"

THE BALLAD OF BOH DA THONE

This is the ballad of Boh Da Thone,
Erst a Pretender to Theebaw's throne,
Who harried the district of Alalone;
How he met with his fate and the V.P.P.
At the hand of Harendra Mukerji,
Senior Gomashta, G.B.T.

Boh Da Thone was a warrior bold,
His sword and his Snider were bossed with gold,

And the Peacock Banner his henchman bore
Was stiff with bullion, but stiffer with gore.

He shot at the strong and he slashed at the weak
From the Salween scrub to the Chindwin teak:

He crucified noble, he sacrificed mean,
He filled old women with kerosene:

While over the water the papers cried,
"The patriot fights for his countryside!"

But little they cared for the Native Press,
The worn white soldiers in Khaki dress,

Who tramped through the jungle and camped
in the byre,
Who died in the swamp and were tombed in
the mire,

Who gave up their lives, at the Queen's Com-
mand,
For the Pride of their Race, and the Peace of
the Land.

Now, first of the foemen of Boh Da Thone
Was Captain O'Neil of the "Black Tyrone,"

And his was a Company, seventy strong,
Who hustled that dissolute Chief along.

There were lads from Galway and Louth and
Meath
Who went to their death with a joke in their
teeth,

And worshipped with fluency, fervor, and zeal
The mud on the boot-heels of "Crook" O'Neil.

But ever a blight on their labors lay,
And ever their quarry would vanish away,

Till the sun-dried boys of the Black Tyrone
Took a brotherly interest in Boh Da Thone:

And, sooth, if pursuit in possession ends,
The Boh and his trackers were best of friends.

The word of a scout—a march by night—
A rush through the mist—a scattering fight—

A volley from cover—a corpse in the clearing—
The glimpse of a loin-cloth and heavy jade earring—

The flare of a village—the tally of slain—
And . . . the Boh was abroad "on the raid" again!

They cursed their luck, as the Irish will,
They gave him credit for cunning and skill,

They buried their dead, they bolted their beef,
And started anew on the track of the thief

Till, in place of the "Kalends of Greece," men said,
"When Crook and his darlings come back with the head."

They hunted the Boh from the hills to the
plain—
He doubled and broke for the hills again:

They had crippled his power for rapine and
raid
They had routed him out of his pet stockade,

And at last, they came, when the Day Star
tired,
To a camp deserted—a village fired.

A black cross blistered the Morning-gold,
And the body upon it was stark and cold.

The wind of the dawn went merrily past,
The high grass bowed her plumes to the blast.

And out of the grass, on a sudden, broke
A spirtle of fire, a whorl of smoke—

And Captain O'Neil of the Black Tyrone
Was blessed with a slug in the ulna-bone—
The gift of his enemy Boh Da Thone.

(Now a slug that is hammered from telegraph-
wire
Is a thorn in the flesh and a rankling fire.)

* * * * * *

The shot-wound festered—as shot-wounds may
In a steaming barrack at Mandalay.

The left arm throbbed, and the Captain swore,
"I'd like to be after the Boh once more!"

The fever held him—the Captain said,
"I'd give a hundred to look at his head!"

The Hospital punkahs creaked and whirred,
But Babu Harendra (Gomashta) heard.

He thought of the cane-brake, green and dank,
That girdled his home by the Dacca tank.

He thought of his wife and his High School son.
He thought—but abandoned the thought—of a gun.

His sleep was broken by visions dread
Of a shining Boh with a silver head.

He kept his counsel and went his way,
And swindled the cartmen of half their pay.

* * * * * *

And the months went on, as the worst must
do,
And the Boh returned to the raid anew.

But the Captain had quitted the long-drawn
strife,
And in far Simoorie had taken a wife.

And she was a damsel of delicate mould,
With hair like the sunshine and heart of gold,

And little she knew the arms that embraced
Had cloven a man from the brow to the waist:

And little she knew that the loving lips
Had ordered a quivering life's eclipse,

And the eye that lit at her lightest breath
Had glared unawed in the Gates of Death.

(For these be matters a man would hide,
As a general rule, from an innocent Bride.)

And little the Captain thought of the past,
And, of all men, Babu Harendra last.

* * * * * *

But slow, in the sludge of the Kathun road,
The Government Bullock Train toted its load.

Speckless and spotless and shining with *ghee,*
In the rearmost cart sat the Babu-jee.

And ever a phantom before him fled
Of a scowling Boh with a silver head.

Then the lead-cart stuck, though the coolies slaved,
And the cartmen flogged and the escort raved;

And out of the jungle, with yells and squeals,
Pranced Boh Da Thone, and his gang at his heels!

Then belching blunderbuss answered back
The Snider's snarl and the carbine's crack,

And the blithe revolver began to sing
To the blade that twanged on the locking-ring,

And the brown flesh blued where the bay'net kissed,
As the steel shot back with a wrench and a twist,

And the great white bullocks with onyx eyes
Watched the souls of the dead arise,

And over the smoke of the fusillade
The Peacock Banner staggered and swayed.

Oh, gayest of scrimmages man may see
Is a well-worked rush on the G.B.T.!

The Babu shook at the horrible sight,
And girded his ponderous loins for flight,

But Fate had ordained that the Boh should start
On a lone-hand raid of the rearmost cart,

And out of that cart, with a bellow of woe,
The Babu fell—flat on the top of the Boh!

For years had Harendra served the State,
To the growth of his purse and the girth of his *pêt*—

There were twenty stone, as the tally-man knows,
On the broad of the chest of this best of Bohs.

And twenty stone from a height discharged
Are bad for a Boh with a spleen enlarged.

Oh, short was the struggle—severe was the shock—
He dropped like a bullock—he lay like a block;

And the Babu above him, convulsed with fear,
Heard the laboring life-breath hissed out in his ear.

And thus in a fashion undignified
The princely pest of the Chindwin died.

* * * * * *

Turn now to Simoorie where, lapped in his ease,
The Captain is petting the Bride on his knees

Where the *whit* of the bullet, the wounded man's scream
Are mixed as the mist of some devilish dream—

Forgotten, forgotten the sweat of the shambles
Where the hill-daisy blooms and the grey monkey gambols,

From the sword-belt set free and released from the steel,
The Peace of the Lord is with Captain O'Neil.

Up the hill to Simoorie—most patient of drudges,
The bags on his shoulder, the mail-runner trudges.

"For Captain O'Neil, *Sahib*. One hundred and ten
Rupees to collect on delivery."

Then
(Their breakfast was stopped while the screw-jack and hammer
Tore wax-cloth, split teak-wood, and chipped out the dammer;)

Open-eyed, open-mouthed, on the napery's snow,
With a crash and a thud, rolled—the Head of the Boh!
And gummed to the scalp was a letter which ran:

"In Fielding Force Service.
Encampment,
"10th Jan.

"Dear Sir,—I have honor to send, *as you said,*
"For final approval (see under) Boh's Head;

"Was took by myself in most bloody affair.
"By High Education brought pressure to bear.

"Now violate Liberty, time being bad,
"To mail V.P.P. (rupees hundred) Please add

"Whatever Your Honor can pass. Price of Blood
"Much cheap at one hundred, and children want food.

"So trusting Your Honor will somewhat retain
"True love and affection for Govt. Bullock Train,

"And show awful kindness to satisfy me,
"I am,
"Graceful Master,
"Your
"H. Mukerji."

* * * * * *

As the rabbit is drawn to the rattlesnake's power,
As the smoker's eye fills at the opium hour,

As a horse reaches up to the manger above,
As the waiting ear yearns for the whisper of love,

From the arms of the Bride, iron-visaged and slow,
The Captain bent down to the Head of the Boh.

And e'en as he looked on the Thing where it lay
'Twixt the winking new spoons and the napkins' array,

The freed mind fled back to the long-ago days—
The hand-to-hand scuffle—the smoke and the blaze—

The forced march at night and the quick rush at dawn—
The banjo at twilight, the burial ere morn—

The stench of the marshes—the raw, piercing smell
When the overhand stabbing-cut silenced the yell—

The oaths of his Irish that surged when they stood
Where the black crosses hung o'er the Kuttamow flood.

As a derelict ship drifts away with the tide
The Captain went out on the Past from his Bride,

Back, back, through the springs to the chill of the year,
When he hunted the Boh from Maloon to Tsaleer.

As the shape of a corpse dimmers up through deep water,
In his eye lit the passionless passion of slaughter,

And men who had fought with O'Neil for the life
Had gazed on his face with less dread than his wife.

For she who had held him so long could not hold him—
Though a four-month Eternity should have controlled him—

But watched the twin Terror—the head turned to head—
The scowling, scarred Black, and the flushed, savage Red—

The spirit that changed from her knowing and
flew to
Some grim hidden Past she had never a clue
to.

But It knew as It grinned, for he touched it
unfearing,
And muttered aloud, "So you kept that jade
earring!"

Then nodded, and kindly, as friend nods to
friend,
"Old man, you fought well, but you lost in the
end."

* * * * * *

The visions departed, and Shame followed
Passion,
"He took what I said in this horrible fashion,

"I'll write to Harendra!" With language un-
sainted
The Captain came back to the Bride . . .
who had fainted.

* * * * * *

And this is a fiction? No. Go to Simoorie
And look at their baby, a twelve-month old
Houri,

A pert little, Irish-eyed Kathleen Mavournin—
She's always about on the Mall of a mornin'—

And you'll see, if her right shoulder-strap is displaced,
This: *Gules* upon *argent,* a Boh's Head, ***erased!***

THE LAMENT OF THE BORDER CATTLE THIEF

O woe is me for the merry life
I led beyond the Bar,
And a treble woe for my winsome wife
That weeps at Shalimar.

They have taken away my long jezail,
My shield and sabre fine,
And heaved me into the Central Jail
For lifting of the kine.

The steer may low within the byre,
The Jut may tend his grain,
But there'll be neither loot nor fire
Till I come back again.

And God have mercy on the Jut
When once my fetters fall,
And Heaven defend the farmer's hut
When I am loosed from thrall.

It's woe to bend the stubborn back
Above the grinching quern,
It's woe to hear the leg-bar clack
And jingle when I turn!

But for the sorrow and the shame,
The brand on me and mine,
I'll pay you back in leaping flame
And loss of the butchered kine.

For every cow I spared before
In charity set free,
If I may reach my hold once more
I'll reive an honest three!

For every time I raised the low
That scared the dusty plain,
By sword and cord, by torch and tow
I'll light the land with twain!

Ride hard, ride hard, to Abazai,
Young Sahib with the *yellow* hair—
Lie close, lie close as khuttucks lie,
Fat herds below Bonair!

The one I'll shoot at twilight tide,
At dawn I'll drive the other;
The black shall mourn for hoof and hide,
The white man for his brother!

'Tis war, red war, I'll give you then,
War till my sinews fail,
For the wrong you have done to a chief of men

And a thief of the Zukka Kheyl.

And if I fall to your hand afresh
I give you leave for the sin
That you cram my throat with the foul pig's flesh
And swing me in the skin!

THE RHYME OF THE THREE CAPTAINS

This ballad appears to refer to one of the exploits of the notorious Paul Jones, the American Pirate. It is founded on fact.

. . . At the close of a winter day,
Their anchors down, by London town, the Three Great Captains lay.
And one was Admiral of the North from Solway Firth to Skye,
And one was Lord of the Wessex coast and all the lands thereby,
And one was Master of the Thames from Limehouse to Blackwall,
And he was Captain of the Fleet—the bravest of them all.
Their good guns guarded their great grey sides that were thirty foot in the sheer,
When there came a certain trading-brig with news of a privateer.

Her rigging was rough with the clotted drift
that drives in a Northern breeze,
Her sides were clogged with the lazy weed
that spawns in the Eastern seas.
Light she rode in the rude tide-rip, to left and
right she rolled,
And the skipper sat on the scuttle-butt and
stared at an empty hold.
"I ha' paid Port dues for your Law," quoth
he, "and where is the Law ye boast
"If I sail unscathed from a heathen port to be
robbed on a Christian coast?
"Ye have smoked the hives of the Laccadives
as we burn the lice in a bunk;
"We tack not now to a Gallang prow or a
plunging Pei-ho junk;
"I had no fear but the seas were clear as far as
a sail might fare
"Till I met with a lime-washed Yankee brig
that rode off Finisterre.
"There were canvas blinds to his bow-gun
ports to screen the weight he bore
"And the signals ran for a merchantman from
Sandy Hook to the Nore.
"He would not fly the Rovers' flag—the
bloody or the black,
"But now he floated the Gridiron and now he
flaunted the Jack.

"He spoke of the Law as he crimped my crew
—he swore it was only a loan;
"But when I would ask for my own again, he
swore it was none of my own.
"He has taken my little parrakeets that nest
beneath the Line,
"He has stripped my rails of the shaddock-
frails and the green unripened pine;
"He has taken my bale of dammer and spice I
won beyond the seas,
"He has taken my grinning heathen gods—
and what should he want o' these?
"My foremast would not mend his boom, my
deck-house patch his boats;
"He has whittled the two this Yank Yahoo,
to peddle for shoepeg-oats.
"I could not fight for the failing light and a
rough beam-sea beside,
"But I hulled him once for a clumsy crimp
and twice because he lied.
"Had I had guns (as I had goods) to work my
Christian harm,
"I had run him up from his quarter-deck to
trade with his own yard-arm;
"I had nailed his ears to my capstan-head, and
ripped them off with a saw.
"And soused them in the bilgewater, and
served them to him raw;

"I had flung him blind in a rudderless boat to
rot in the rocking bark;
"I had towed him aft of his own craft, a bait
for his brother shark;
"I had lapped him round with cocoa husk, and
drenched him with the oil,
"And lashed him fast to his own mast to blaze
above my spoil;
"I had stripped his hide for my hammock-side,
and tasselled his beard i' the mesh
"And spitted his crew on the live bamboo that
grows through the gangrened flesh;
"I had hove him down by the mangroves
brown, where the mud-reef sucks and
draws,
"Moored by the heel to his own keel to wait
for the land-crab's claws!
"He is lazar within and lime without, ye can
nose him far enow,
"For he carries the taint of a musky ship—the
reek of the slaver's dhow!"
The skipper looked at the tiering guns and the
bulwarks tall and cold,
And the Captains Three full courteously
peered down at the gutted hole,
And the Captains Three called courteously
from deck to scuttle-butt:
"Good Sir, we ha' dealt with that merchant-
man or ever your teeth were cut.

"Your words be words of a lawless race, and
the Law it standeth thus:
"He comes of a race that have never a Law,
and he never has boarded us.
"We ha' sold him canvas and rope and spar—
we know that his price is fair,
"And we know that he weeps for the lack of a
Law as he rides off Finisterre.
"And since he is damned for a gallows-thief
by you and better than you,
"We hold it meet that the English fleet should
know that we hold him true."
The skipper called to the tall taffrail: "And
what is that to me?
"Did ever you hear of a privateer that rifled a
Seventy-three?
"Do I loom so large from your quarter-deck
that I lift like a ship o' the Line?
"He has learned to run from a shotted gun and
harry such craft as mine.
"There is never a Law on the Cocos Keys to
hold a white man in,
"But we do not steal the niggers' meal, for
that is a nigger's sin.
"Must he have his Law as a quid to chaw, or
laid in brass on his wheel?
"Does he steal with tears when he buccaneers?
'Fore Gad, then, why does he steal?"

The skipper bit on a deep-sea word, and the word it was not sweet,
For he could see the Captains Three had signalled to the Fleet.
But three and two, in white and blue, the whimpering flags began:
"We have heard a tale of a foreign sail, but he is a merchantman."
The skipper peered beneath his palm and swore by the Great Horn Spoon,
"'Fore Gad, the Chaplain of the Fleet would bless my picaroon!"
By two and three the flags flew free to lash the laughing air,
"We have sold our spars to the merchantman —we know that his price is fair."
The skipper winked his Western eye, and swore by a China storm:
"They ha' rigged him a Joseph's jury-coat to keep his honor warm."
The halliards twanged against the tops, the bunting bellied broad,
The skipper spat in the empty hold and mourned for a wasted cord.
Masthead—masthead, the signal sped by the line o' the British craft;
The skipper called to his Lascar crew, and put her about and laughed:

"It's mainsail haul, my bully boys all—we'll
out to the seas again;
"Ere they set us to paint their pirate saint, or
scrub at his grapnel-chain
"It's fore-sheet free, with her head to the sea
and the swing of the unbought brine—
"We'll make no sport in an English court till
we come as a ship o' the Line,
"Till we come as a ship o' the Line, my lads,
of thirty foot in the sheer,
"Lifting again from an outer main with news
of a privateer;
"Flying his pluck at our mizzen-truck for weft
of Admiralty,
"Heaving his head for our dipsy-lead in sign
that we keep the sea.
"Then fore-sheet home as she lifts to the foam
—we stand on the outward tack
"We are paid in the coin of the white man's
trade—the bezant is hard, ay, and black.
"The frigate-bird shall carry my word to the
Kling and the Orang-Laut
"How a man may sail from a heathen coast to
be robbed in a Christian port;
"How a man may be robbed in Christian port
while Three Great Captains there
"Shall dip their flag to a slaver's rag—to show
that his trade is fair!"

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THE BALLAD OF THE "CLAMPHERDOWN"

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown"
Would sweep the Channel clean,
Wherefore she kept her hatches close
When the merry Channel chops arose,
To save the bleached marine.

She had one bow-gun of a hundred ton,
And a great stern-gun beside;
They dipped their noses deep in the sea,
They racked their stays and staunchions free
In the wash of the wind-whipped tide.

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown,"
Fell in with a cruiser light,
That carried the dainty Hotchkiss gun
And a pair o' heels wherewith to run,
From the grip of a close-fought fight.

She opened fire at seven miles—
As ye shoot at a bobbing cork—
And once she fired and twice she fired,
Till the bow-gun drooped like a lily tired
That lolls upon the stalk.

"Captain, the bow-gun melts apace,
"The deck-beams break below,
" 'Twere well to rest for an hour or twain,
"And botch the shattered plates again."
And he answered, "Make it so."

She opened fire within the mile—
As ye shoot at the flying duck—
And the great stern-gun shot fair and true,
With the heave of the ship, to the stainless blue,
And the great stern-turret stuck.

"Captain, the turret fills with steam,
"The feed-pipes burst below—
"You can hear the hiss of helpless ram,
"You can hear the twisted runners jam."
And he answered, "Turn and go!"

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown,"
And grimly did she roll;
Swung round to take the cruiser's fire
As the White Whale faces the Thresher's ire
When they war by the frozen Pole.

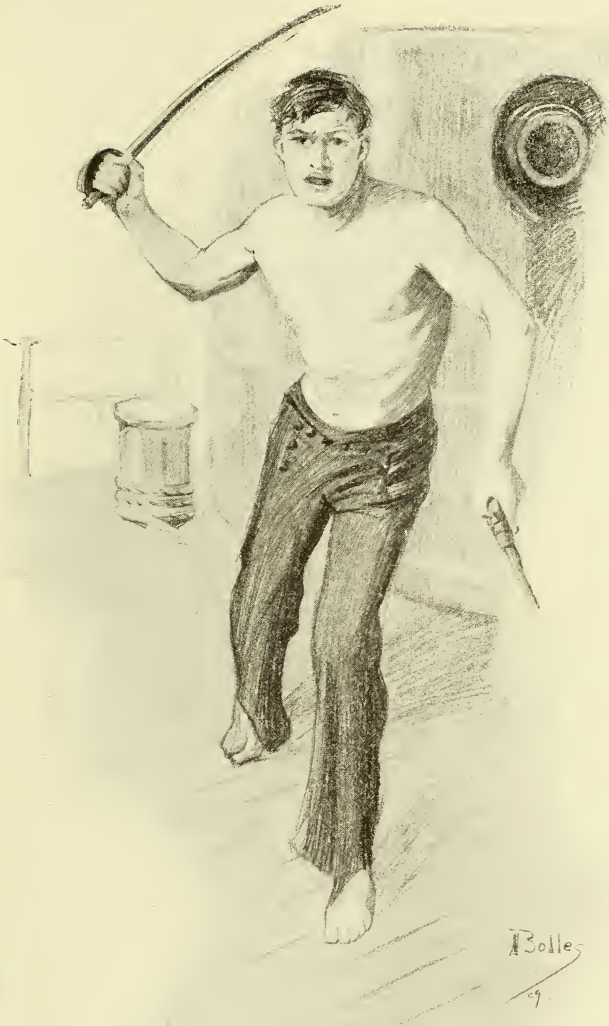
"Captain, the shells are falling fast,
"And faster still fall we;
"And it is not meet for English stock,
"To bide in the heart of an eight-day clock,
"The death they cannot see."

"Lie down, lie down, my bold A.B.,
"We drift upon her beam;
"We dare not ram for she can run;
"And dare ye fire another gun,
"And die in the peeling steam?"

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown"
That carried an armor-belt;
But fifty feet at stern and bow,
Lay bare as the paunch of the purser's sow,
To the hail of the Nordenfeldt.

"Captain, they lack us through and through;
"The chilled steel bolts are swift!
"We have emptied the bunkers in open sea,
"Their shrapnel bursts where our coal should be."
And he answered, "Let her drift."

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown,"
Swung round upon the tide,
Her two dumb guns glared south and north,
And the blood and the bubbling steam ran forth,
And she ground the cruiser's side.


A Bolles

"Captain, they cry, the fight is done,
"They bid you send your sword."
And he answered, "Grapple her stern and bow.
"They have asked for the steel. They shall have it now;
"Out cutlasses and board!"

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown,"
Spewed up four hundred men;
And the scalded stokers yelped delight,
As they rolled in the waist and heard the fight,
Stamp o'er their steel-walled pen.

They cleared the cruiser end to end,
From conning-tower to hold.
They fought as they fought in Nelson's fleet;
They were stripped to the waist, they were bare to the feet,
As it was in the days of old.

It was the sinking "Clampherdown"
Heaved up her battered side—
And carried a million pounds in steel,
To the cod and the corpse-fed conger-eel,
And the scour of the Channel tide.

It was the crew of the "Clampherdown"
  Stood out to sweep the sea,
On a cruiser won from an ancient foe,
As it was in the days of long-ago,
  And as it still shall be.

THE BALLAD OF THE "BOLIVAR"

Seven men from all the world, back to Docks again,
Rolling down the Ratcliffe Road drunk and raising Cain;
Give the girls another drink 'fore we sign away—
We that took the "Bolivar" out across the Bay!

We put out from Sunderland loaded down with rails;
We put back to Sunderland 'cause our cargo shifted;
We put out from Sunderland—met the winter gales—
Seven days and seven nights to the Start we drifted.

Racketing her rivets loose, smoke-stack white as snow,
All the coals adrift a deck, half the rails below
Leaking like a lobster-pot, steering like a dray—
Out we took the "Bolivar," out across the Bay!

One by one the Lights came up, winked and
let us by;
Mile by mile we waddled on, coal and
fo'c'sle short;
Met a blow that laid us down, heard a bulk-
head fly;
Left The Wolf behind us with a two foot-
list to port.

Trailing like a wounded duck, working out
her soul;
Clanging like a smith-shop after every
roll;
Just a funnel and a mast lurching through
the spray—
So we threshed the "Bolivar" out across the
Bay!

Felt her hog and felt her sag, betted when
she'd break;
Wondered every time she raced if she'd
stand the shock;
Heard the seas like drunken men pounding at
her strake;
Hoped the Lord 'ud keep his thumb on the
plummer-block.
Banged against the iron decks, bilges
choked with coal;

Flayed and frozen foot and hand, sick of heart and soul;
'Last we prayed she'd buck herself into Judgment Day—
Hi! we cursed the "Bolivar" knocking round the Bay!

Oh! her nose flung up to sky, groaning to be still—
Up and down and back we went, never time for breath;
Then the money paid at Lloyd's caught her by the heel,
And the stars ran round and round dancin' at our death.

Aching for an hour's sleep, dozing off between;
Heard the rotten rivets draw when she took it green;
Watched the compass chase its tail like a cat at play—
That was on the "Bolivar," south across the Bay.

Once we saw between the squalls, lyin' head to swell—
Mad with work and weariness, wishin' they was we—

Some damned Liner's lights go by like a grand hotel;
Cheered her from the "Bolivar," swampin' in the sea.

Then a greyback cleared us out, then the skipper laughed;
"Boys, the wheel has gone to Hell—rig the winches aft!
"Yoke the kicking rudder-head—get her under way!"
So we steered her, pulley-haul, out across the Bay!

Just a pack o' rotten plates puttied up with tar,
In we came, an' time enough 'cross Bilbao Bar.
Overloaded, undermanned, meant to founder, we
Euchred God Almighty's storm, bluffed the Eternal Sea!

Seven men from all the world, back to town again,
Rollin' down the Ratcliffe Road drunk and raising Cain;
Seven men from out of Hell. Ain't the owners gay,
'Cause we took the "Bolivar" safe across the Bay?

THE ENGLISH FLAG

Above the portico a flagstaff, bearing the Union Jack, remained fluttering in the flames for some time, but ultimately when it fell the crowds rent the air with shouts, and seemed to see significance in the incident.—DAILY PAPERS.

WINDS of the World, give answer? They are whimpering to and fro—
And what should they know of England who only England know?—
The poor little street-bred people that vapor and fume and brag,
They are lifting their heads in the stillness to yelp at the English Flag!

Must we borrow a clout from the Boer—to plaster anew with dirt?
An Irish liar's bandage, or an English coward's shirt?
We may not speak of England; her Flag's to sell or share.
What is the Flag of England? Winds of the World, declare!

The North Wind blew: "From Bergen my steel-shod vanguards go;
"I chase your lazy whalers home from the Disko floe;
"By the great North Lights above me I work the will of God,
"That the liner splits on the ice-field or the Dogger fills with cod.

"I barred my gates with iron, I shuttered my doors with flame,
"Because to force my ramparts your nutshell navies came;
"I took the sun from their presence, I cut them down with my blast,
"And they died, but the Flag of England blew free ere the spirit passed.

"The lean white bear hath seen it in the long, long Arctic night,
"The musk-ox knows the standard that flouts the Northern Light:
"What is the Flag of England? Ye have but my bergs to dare,
"Ye have but my drifts to conquer. Go forth, for it is there!"

The South Wind sighed: "From the Virgins
my mid-sea course was ta'en
"Over a thousand islands lost in an idle main,
"Where the sea-egg flames on the coral and
the long-backed breakers croon
"Their endless ocean legends to the lazy,
locked lagoon.

"Strayed amid lonely islets, mazed amid outer
keys,
"I waked the palms to laughter—I tossed the
scud in the breeze—
"Never was isle so little, never was sea so lone,
"But over the scud and the palm-trees an Eng-
lish flag was flown.

"I have wrenched it free from the halliard to
hang for a wisp on the Horn;
"I have chased it north to the Lizard—rib-
boned and rolled and torn;
"I have spread its folds o'er the dying, adrift
in a hopeless sea;
"I have hurled it swift on the slaver, and seen
the slave set free.

"My basking sunfish know it, and wheeling
albatross,
"Where the lone wave fills with fire beneath
the Southern Cross.

"What is the Flag of England?- Ye have but
my reefs to dare,
"Ye have but my seas to furrow. Go forth,
for it is there!"

The East Wind roared: "From the Kuriles,
the Bitter Seas, I come,
"And me men call the Home-Wind, for I bring
the English home.
"Look—look well to your shipping! By the
breath of my mad typhoon
"I swept your close-packed Praya and beached
your best at Kowloon!

"The reeling junks behind me and the racing
seas before,
"I raped your richest roadstead—I plundered
Singapore!
"I set my hand on the Hoogli; as a hooded
snake she rose,
"And I flung your stoutest steamers to roost
with the startled crows.

"Never the lotos closes, never the wild-fowl
wake,
"But a soul goes out on the East Wind that
died for England's sake—

"Man or woman or suckling, mother or bride
or maid—
"Because on the bones of the English the English Flag is stayed.

"The desert-dust hath dimmed it, the flying
wild-ass knows
"The scared white leopard winds it across the
taintless snows.
"What is the Flag of England? Ye have but
my sun to dare,
"Ye have but my sands to travel. Go forth,
for it is there!"

The West Wind called: "In squadrons the
thoughtless galleons fly
"That bear the wheat and cattle lest street-
bred people die.
"They make my might their porter, they make
my house their path,
"Till I loose my neck from their rudder and
whelm them all in my wrath.

"I draw the gliding fog-bank as a snake is
drawn from the hole;
"They bellow one to the other, the frighted
ship-bells toll,

"For day is a drifting terror till I raise the
shroud with my breath,
"And they see strange bows above them and
the two go locked to death.

"But whether in calm or wrack-**wreath,**
whether by dark or day,
"I heave them whole to the conger or rip their
plates away,
"First of the scattered legions, under a shriek-
ing sky,
"Dipping between the rollers, the English
Flag goes by.

"The dead dumb fog hath wrapped it—the
frozen dews have kissed—
"The naked stars have seen it, a fellow-star in
the mist.
"What is the Flag of England? Ye have but
my breath to dare,
"Ye have but my waves to conquer. Go forth,
for it is there!"

"CLEARED"

(IN MEMORY OF A COMMISSION)

HELP for a patriot distressed, a spotless spirit hurt,
Help for an honorable clan sore trampled in the dirt!
From Queenstown Bay to Donegal, O listen to my song,
The honorable gentlemen have suffered grievous wrong.

Their noble names were mentioned—O the burning, black disgrace!—
By a brutal Saxon paper in an Irish shooting-case;
They sat upon it for a year, then steeled their heart to brave it,
And "coruscating innocence" the learned Judges gave it.

Bear witness, Heaven, of that grim crime beneath the surgeon's knife,
The honorable gentleman deplored the loss of life;

Bear witness of those chanting choirs that
burk and shirk and snigger,
No man laid hand upon the knife or finger to
the trigger!

Cleared in the face of all mankind beneath the
winking skies,
Like phœnixes from Phœnix Park (and what
lay there) they rise!
Go shout it to the emerald seas—give word to
Erin now,
Her honorable gentlemen are cleared—and
this is how:

They only paid the Moonlighter his cattle-
hocking price,
They only helped the murderer with council's
best advice,
But—sure it keeps their honor white—the
learned Court believes
They never gave a piece of plate to murderers
and thieves.

They never told the ramping crowd to card a
woman's hide,
They never marked a man for death—what
fault of theirs he died?—

They only said "intimidate," and talked and went away—
By God, the boys that did the work were braver men than they!

Their sin it was that fed the fire—small blame to them that heard—
The "bhoys" get drunk on rhetoric, and maddden at the word—
They knew whom they were talking at, if they were Irish too,
The gentlemen that lied in Court, they knew and well they knew.

They only took the Judas-gold from Fenians out of jail,
They only fawned for dollars on the blood-dyed Clan-na-Gael.
If black is black or white is white, in black and white it's down,
They're only traitors to the Queen and rebels to the Crown.

"Cleared," honorable gentlemen. Be thankful it's no more:
The widow's curse is on your house, the dead are at your door.

On you the shame of open shame, on you from North to South
The hand of every honest man flat-heeled across your mouth.

"Less black than we were painted"?—Faith, no word of black was said;
The lightest touch was human blood, and that, ye know, runs red.
It's sticking to your fist to-day, for all your sneer and scoff,
And by the Judge's well-weighed word you cannot wipe it off.

Hold up those hands of innocence—go, scare your sheep together,
The blundering, tripping tups that bleat behind the old bell-weather;
And if they snuff the taint and break to find another pen,
Tell them it's tar that glistens so, and daub them yours again!

"The charge is old"?—As old as Cain—as fresh as yesterday;
Old as the Ten Commandments, have ye talked those laws away?

If words are words, or death is death, or powder sends the ball,
You spoke the words that sped the shot—the curse be on you all.

"Our friends believe"? Of course they do—as sheltered women may;
But have they seen the shrieking soul ripped from the quivering clay?
They!—if their own front door is shut, they'll swear the whole world's warm;
What do they know of dread of death or hanging fear of harm?

The secret half a county keeps, the whisper in the lane,
The shriek that tells the shot went home behind the broken pane,
The dry blood crisping in the sun that scares the honest bees,
And shows the "bhoys" have heard your talk —what do they know of these?

But you—you know—ay, ten times more; the secrets of the dead,
Black terror on the country-side, by word and whisper bred,

The mangled stallion's scream at night, the tail-cropped heifer's low.
Who set the whisper going first? You know, and well you know!

My soul! I'd sooner lie in jail for murder plain and straight,
Pure crime I'd done with my own hand for money, lust, or hate,
Than take a seat in Parliament by fellow-felons cheered,
While one of those "not provens" proved me cleared as you are cleared.

Cleared—you that "lost" the League accounts —go, guard our honor still,
Go, help to make our country's laws that broke God's law at will—
One hand stuck out behind the back, to signal "strike again";
The other on your dress-shirt-front to show your heart is clane.

If black is black or white is white, in black and white it's down,
You're only traitors to the Queen and rebels to the Crown.
If print is print or words are words, the learned Court perpends:
We are not ruled by murderers, but only—by their friends.

AN IMPERIAL RESCRIPT

Now this is the tale of the Council the German
Kaiser decreed,
To ease the strong of their burden, to help the
weak in their need:
He sent a word to the peoples, who struggle,
and pant, and sweat,
That the straw might be counted fairly and
the tally of bricks be set.

The Lords of Their Hands assembled; from
the East and the West they drew—
Baltimore, Lille, and Essen, Brummagem,
Clyde, and Crewe.
And some were black from the furnace, and
some were brown from the soil,
And some were blue from the dye-vat; but all
were wearied of toil.

And the young King said, "I have found it,
the road to the rest ye seek
"The strong shall wait for the weary, the hale
shall halt for the weak;

"With the even tramp of an army where no man breaks from the line,
"Ye shall march to peace and plenty in the bond of brotherhood—sign!"

The paper lay on the table, the strong heads bowed thereby,
And a wail went up from the peoples: "Ay, sign—give rest, for we die!"
A hand was stretched to the goose-quill, a fist was cramped to scrawl,
When—the laugh of a blue-eyed maiden ran clear through the council-hall.

And each one heard Her laughing as each one saw Her plain—
Saidie, Mimi, or Olga, Gretchen, or Mary Jane.
And the Spirit of Man that is in Him to the light of the vision woke;
And the men drew back from the paper, as a Yankee delegate spoke:

"There's a girl in Jersey City who works on the telephone;
"We're going to hitch our horses and dig for a house of our own.

"With gas and water connections, and steam-heat through to the top;
"And, W. Hohenzollern, I guess I shall work till I drop."

And an English delegate thundered: "The weak an' the lame be blowed!
"I've a berth in the Sou'-West workshops, a home in the Wandsworth Road;
"And till the 'sociation has footed my buryin' bill,
"I work for the kids an' the missus. Pull up! I'll be damned if I will!"

And over the German benches the bearded whisper ran:
"Lager, der girls und der dollars, dey makes or dey breaks a man.
"If Schmitt haf collared der dollars, he collars der girl deremit;
"But if Schmitt bust in der pizness, we collars der girl from Schmitt."

They passed one resolution: "Your sub-committee believe
"You can lighten the curse of Adam when you've lightened the curse of Eve.

"But till we are built like angels—with hammer and chisel and pen,
"We will work for ourself and a woman, forever and ever. Amen."

Now this is the tale of the Council the German Kaiser held—
The day that they razored the Grindstone, the day that the Cat was belled,
The day of the Figs from Thistles, the day of the Twisted Sands,
The day that the laugh of a maiden made light of the Lords of Their Hands.

TOMLINSON

Now Tomlinson gave up the ghost in his house in Berkeley Square,
And a Spirit came to his bedside and gripped him by the hair—
A Spirit gripped him by the hair and carried him far away,
Till he heard as the roar of a rain-fed ford the roar of the Milky Way,
Till he heard the roar of the Milky Way die down and drone and cease,
And they came to the Gate within the Wall where Peter holds the keys.
"Stand up, stand up now, Tomlinson, and answer loud and high
"The good that ye did for the sake of men or ever ye came to die—
"The good that ye did for the sake of men in little earth so lone!"
And the naked soul of Tomlinson grew white as a rain-washed bone.
"O, I have a friend on earth," he said, "that was my priest and guide,
"And well would he answer all for me if he were by my side."

—"For that ye strove in neighbor-love it shall be written fair,
"But now ye wait at Heaven's Gate and not in Berkeley Square:
"Though we called your friend from his bed this night, he could not speak for you,
"For the race is run by one and one and never by two and two."
Then Tomlinson looked up and down, and little gain was there,
For the naked stars grinned overhead, and he saw that his soul was bare:
The Wind that blows between the worlds, it cut him like a knife,
And Tomlinson took up his tale and spoke of his good in life.
"This I have read in a book," he said, "and that was told to me,
"And this I have thought that another man thought of a Prince in Muscovy."
The good souls flocked like homing doves and bade him clear the path,
And Peter twirled the jangling keys in weariness and wrath.
"Ye have read, ye have heard, ye have thought," he said, "and the tale is yet to run:
"By the worth of the body that once ye had, give answer—what ha' ye done?"

Then Tomlinson looked back and forth, and little good it bore,
For the Darkness stayed at his shoulder-blade and Heaven's Gate before:
"Oh, this I have felt, and this I have guessed, and this I have heard men say,
"And this they wrote that another man wrote of a carl in Norroway."
"Ye have read, ye have felt, ye have guessed, good lack! Ye have hampered Heaven's Gate;
"There's little room between the stars in idleness to prate!
"Oh, none may reach by hired speech of neighbor, priest, and kin,
"Through borrowed deed to God's good meed that lies so far within;
"Get hence, get hence to the Lord of Wrong, for doom has yet to run,
"And . . . the faith that ye share with Berkeley Square uphold you, Tomlinson!"

* * * * * *

The Spirit gripped him by the hair, and sun by sun they fell
Till they came to the belt of Naughty Stars that rim the mouth of Hell:

The first are red with pride and wrath, the next are white with pain,
But the third are black with clinkered sin that cannot burn again:
They may hold their path, they may leave their path, with never a soul to mark,
They may burn or freeze, but they must not cease in the Scorn of the Outer Dark.
The Wind that blows between the worlds, it nipped him to the bone,
And he yearned to the flare of Hell-gate there as the light of his own hearth-stone.
The Devil he sat behind the bars, where the desperate legions drew,
But he caught the hasting Tomlinson and would not let him through.
"Wot ye the price of good pit-coal that I must pay?" said he,
"That ye rank yoursel' so fit for Hell and ask no leave of me?
"I am all o'er-sib to Adam's breed that ye should give me scorn,
"For I strove with God for your First Father the day that he was born.
"Sit down, sit down upon the slag, and answer loud and high
"The harm that ye did to the Sons of Men or ever you came to die."

And Tomlinson looked up and up, and saw against the night
The belly of a tortured star blood-red in Hell-Mouth light;
And Tomlinson looked down and down, and saw beneath his feet
The frontlet of a tortured star milk-white in Hell-Mouth heat.
"Oh, I had a love on earth," said he, that kissed me to my fall,
"And if ye would call my love to me I know she would answer all."
—"All that ye did in love forbid it shall be written fair,
"But now ye wait at Hell-Mouth Gate and not in Berkeley Square:
"Though we whistled your love from her bed to-night, I trow she would not run,
"For the sin ye do by two and two ye must pay for one by one!"
The Wind that blows between the worlds, it cut him like a knife,
And Tomlinson took up the tale and spoke of his sin in life:
"Once I ha' laughed at the power of Love and twice at the grip of the Grave,
"And thrice I ha' patted my God on the head that men might call me brave."

The Devil he blew on a brandered soul and set
it aside to cool:
"Do ye think I would waste my good pit-coal
on the hide of a brain-sick fool?
"I see no worth in the hobnailed mirth or the
jolt-head jest ye did
"That I should waken my gentlemen that are
sleeping three on a grid."
Then Tomlinson looked back and forth, and
there was little grace,
For Hell-Gate filled the houseless Soul with
the Fear of Naked Space.
"Nay, this I ha' heard," quo' Tomlinson, "and
this was noised abroad,
"And this I ha' got from a Belgian book on
the word of a dead French lord."
—"Ye ha' heard, ye ha' read, ye ha' got, good
lack! And the tale begins afresh—
"Have ye sinned one sin for the pride o' the
eye or the sinful lust of the flesh?"
Then Tomlinson he gripped the bars and yam-
mered "Let me in—
"For I mind that I borrowed my neighbor's
wife to sin the deadly sin."
The Devil he grinned behind the bars, and
banked the fires high:
"Did ye read of that sin in a book?" said he;
and Tomlinson said "Ay!"

The Devil he blew upon his nails, and the little devils ran;
And he said, "Go husk this whimpering thief that comes in the guise of a man:
"Winnow him out 'twixt star and star, and sieve his proper worth:
"There's sore decline in Adam's line if this be spawn of earth."
Empusa's crew, so naked-new they may not face the fire,
But weep that they bin too small to sin to the height of their desire,
Over the coal they chased the Soul, and racked it all abroad,
As children rifle a caddis-case or the raven's foolish hoard.
And back they came with the tattered Thing, as children after play,
And they said: "The soul that he got from God he has bartered clean away.
"We have threshed a stook of print and book, and winnowed a chattering wind
"And many a soul wherefrom he stole, but his we cannot find:
"We have handled him, we have dandled him, we have seared him to the bone,
"And sure if tooth and nail show truth he has no soul of his own."

The Devil he bowed his head on his breast and rumbled deep and low:
"I'm all o'er-sib to Adam's breed that I should bid him go.
"Yet close we lie, and deep we lie, and if I gave him place,
"My gentlemen that are so proud would flout me to my face;
"They'd call my house a common stews and me a careless host,
"And—I would not anger my gentlemen for the sake of a shiftless ghost."
The Devil he looked at the mangled Soul that prayed to feel the flame,
And he thought of Holy Charity, but he thought of his own good name:
"Now ye could haste my coal to waste, and sit ye down to fry:
"Did ye think of that theft for yourself?" said he; and Tomlinson said "Ay!"
The Devil he blew an outward breath, for his heart was free from care:
"Ye have scarce the soul of a louse," he said, "but the roots of sin are there,
"And for that sin should ye come in were I the lord alone.
"But sinful pride has rule inside—and mightier than my own.

"Honor and Wit, fore-damned they sit, to each his priest and whore:
"Nay, scarce I dare myself go there, and you they'd torture sore.
"Ye are neither spirit nor spirk," he said; "ye are neither book nor brute—
"Go, get ye back to the flesh again for the sake of Man's repute.
"I'm all o'er-sib to Adam's breed that I should mock your pain,
"But look that ye win to worthier sin ere ye come back again.
"Get hence, the hearse is at your door—the grim black stallions wait—
"They bear your clay to place to-day. Speed, lest ye come too late!
"Go back to Earth with a lip unsealed—go back with an open eye,
"And carry my word to the Sons of Men or ever ye come to die:
"That the sin they do by two and two they must pay for one by one—
"And . . . the God that you took from a printed book be with you, Tomlinson!"

BARRACK-ROOM BALLADS

"WHAT are the bugles blowin' for?" said Files-on-Parade.
"To turn you out, to turn you out," the Color-Sergeant said.
"What makes you look so white, so white?" said Files-on-Parade.
"I'm dreadin' what I've got to watch," the Color-Sergeant said.

For they're hangin' Danny Deever, you hear the Dead March play,
The regiment's in 'ollow square—they're hangin' him to-day;
They've taken of his buttons off an' cut his stripes away,
An' they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"What makes the rear-rank breathe so 'ard?" said Files-on-Parade.
"It's bitter cold, it's bitter cold," the Color-Sergeant said.
"What makes that front-rank man fall down?" says Files-on-Parade.
"A touch o' sun, a touch o' sun," the Color-Sergeant said.

They are hangin' Danny Deever, they are marchin' of 'im round,
They 'ave 'alted Danny Deever by 'is coffin on the ground;
An' 'e'll swing in 'arf a minute for a sneakin' shootin' hound—
O they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'!

"'Is cot was right-'and cot to mine," said Files-on-Parade.
"'E's sleepin' out an' far to-night," the Color-Sergeant said.
"I've drunk 'is beer a score o' times," said Files-on-Parade.
"'E's drinkin' bitter beer alone," the Color-Sergeant said.

They are hangin' Danny Deever, you must mark 'im to 'is place,
For 'e shot a comrade sleepin'—you must look 'im in the face;
Nine 'undred of 'is county and the regiment's disgrace,
While they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"What's that so black agin the sun?" said Files-on-Parade.
"It's Danny fightin' 'ard for life," the Color-Sergeant said.

"What's that that whimpers over'ead?" said
Files-on-Parade.
"It's Danny's soul that's passin' now," the
Color-Sergeant said.

For they're done with Danny Deever,
you can 'ear the quickstep play,
The regiment's in column, an' they're
marchin' us away;
Ho! the young recruits are shakin', an'
they'll want their beer to-day,
After hangin' Danny Deever in the
mornin'.

TOMMY

I WENT into a public-'ouse to get a pint o' beer,
The publican 'e up an' sez, "We serve no red-coats here."
The girls be'ind the bar they laughed an' giggled fit to die,
I outs into the street again an' to myself sez I:

O it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy, go away";
But it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins," when the band begins to play,
The band begins to play, my boys, the band begins to play,
O it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins," when the band begins to play.

I went into a theatre as sober as could be,
They gave a drunk civilian room, but 'adn't none for me;
They sent me to the gallery or round the music-'alls,
But when it comes to fightin', Lord! they'll shove me in the stalls!

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy, wait outside";
But it's "Special train for Atkins" when the trooper's on the tide,
The troopship's on the tide, my boys, the troopship's on the tide,
O it's "Special train for Atkins" when the trooper's on the tide.

Yes, makin' mock o' uniforms that guard you while you sleep
Is cheaper than them uniforms, an' they're starvation cheap;
An' hustlin' drunken soldiers when they're goin' large a bit
Is five times better business than paradin' in full kit.

Then it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy, 'ow's yer soul?"
But it's "Thin red line of 'eroes" when the drums begin to roll,
The drums begin to roll, my boys, the drums begin to roll,
O it's "Thin red line of 'eroes" when the drums begin to roll.

We aren't no thin red 'eroes, nor we aren't no
blackguards too,
But single men in barricks, most remarkable
like you;
An' if sometimes our conduck isn't all your
fancy paints:
Why, single men in barricks don't grow into
plaster saints;

While it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that,
an' "Tommy, fall be'ind,"
But it's "Please to walk in front, sir,"
when there's trouble in the wind,
There's trouble in the wind, my boys,
there's trouble in the wind,
O it's "Please to walk in front, sir," when
there's trouble in the wind.

You talk o' better food for us, an' schools, an'
fires, an' all:
We'll wait for extry rations if you treat us
rational.
Don't mess about the cook-room slops, but
prove it to our face
The Widow's Uniform is not the soldier-man's
disgrace.

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Chuck him out, the brute!"
But it's "Saviour of 'is country," when the guns begin to shoot;
Yes, it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' anything you please;
But Tommy ain't a bloomin' fool—you bet that Tommy sees!

"FUZZY-WUZZY"

(SOUDAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE)

We've fought with many men acrost the seas,
An' some of 'em was brave an' some was not.
The Paythan an' the Zulu an' Burmese;
But the Fuzzy was the finest o' the lot.
We never got a ha'porth's change of 'im:
'E squatted in the scrub an' 'ocked our 'orses,
'E cut our sentries up at Sua*kim*
An' 'e played the cat an' banjo with our forces.
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome in the Soudan;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen but a first-class fightin' man;
We gives you your certificate, an' if you want it signed
We'll come an' 'ave a romp with you whenever you're inclined.

We took our chanst among the Kyber 'ills,
The Boers knocked us silly at a mile,
The Burman give us Irriwaddy chills,
An' a Zulu *impi* dished us up in style:

But all we ever got from such as they
  Was pop to what the Fuzzy made us swaller;
We 'eld our bloomin' own, the papers say,
  But man for man the Fuzzy knocked us 'oller.
    Then 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' the missis and the kid;
    Our orders was to break you, an' of course we went an' did.
    We sloshed you with Martinis, an' it wasn't 'ardly fair;
    But for all the odds agin' you, Fuzzy-Wuz you broke the square.

'E 'asn't got no papers of 'is own,
  'E 'asn't got no medals nor rewards,
So we must certify the skill 'e's shown
  In usin' of 'is long two-'anded swords:
When 'e's 'oppin' in an' out among the bush
  With 'is coffin-'eaded shield an' shovel-spear,
An 'appy day with Fuzzy on the rush
  Will last an 'ealthy Tommy for a year.
    So ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' your friends which are no more,
    If we 'adn't lost some messmates we would 'elp you to deplore;

But give an' take's the gospel, an' we'll
call the bargain fair,
For if you 'ave lost more than us,
you crumpled up the square!

'E rushes at the smoke when we let drive,
An', before we know, 'e's 'ackin' at our 'ead;
'E's all 'ot sand an' ginger when alive,
An' 'e's generally shammin' when 'e's dead.
'E's a daisy, 'e's a ducky, 'e's a lamb!
'E's a injia-rubber idiot on the spree,
'E's the on'y thing that doesn't give a damn
For a Regiment o' British Infantree!
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your
'ome in the Soudan;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen, but a
first-class fightin' man;
An 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, with
your 'ayrick 'ead of 'air—
You big black boundin' beggar—for
you broke a British square!

SOLDIER, SOLDIER

"Soldier, soldier, come from the wars,
Why don't you march with my true love?"
"We're fresh from off the ship an' 'e's maybe
give the slip,
An' you'd best go look for a new love."

New love! True love!
Best go look for a new love,
The dead they cannot rise, an' you'd bet-
ter dry your eyes,
An' you'd best go look for a new love.

"Soldier, soldier, come from the wars,
What did you see o' my true love?"
"I seed 'im serve the Queen in a suit o' rifle-
green,
An' you'd best go look for a new love."

"Soldier, soldier, come from the wars,
Did ye see no more o' my true love?"
"I seed 'im runnin' by when the shots began
to fly—
But you'd best go look for a new love."

"Soldier, soldier, come from the wars,
Did aught take 'arm to my true love?"
"I couldn't see the fight, for the smoke it lay
so white—
An' you'd best go look for a new love."

"Soldier, soldier, come from the wars,
I'll up an' tend to my true love!"
" 'E's lying on the dead with a bullet through
'is 'ead,
An' you'd best go look for a new love."

"Soldier, soldier, come from the wars,
I'll down an' die with my true love!"
"The pit we dug'll 'ide 'im an' the twenty men
beside 'im—
An' you'd best go look for a new love."

"Soldier, soldier, come from the wars,
Do you bring no sign from my true love?"
"I bring a lock of 'air that 'e allus used to
wear,
An' you'd best go look for a new love."

"Soldier, soldier, come from the wars,
O then I know it's true I've lost my true love!"
"An' I tell you the truth again—when you've
lost the feel o' pain
You'd best take me for your true love."

True love! New love!
Best take 'im for a new love.
The dead they cannot rise, an' you'd bet-
ter dry your eyes,
An' you'd best take 'im for your true love.

SCREW-GUNS

Smokin' my pipe on the mountings, sniffin' the mornin' cool,
I walks in my old brown gaiters along o' my old brown mule,
With seventy gunners be'ind me, an' never a beggar forgets
It's only the pick of the Army that handles the dear little pets—'Tss! 'Tss!

For you all love the screw-guns, the screw-guns they all love you!
So when we call round with a few guns, o' course you will know what to do—hoo! hoo!
Jest send in your Chief an' surrender—it's worse if you fights or you runs:
You can go where you please, you can skid up the trees, but you don't get away from the guns.

They sends us along where the roads are, but mostly we goes where they ain't:
We'd climb up the side of a sign-board an' trust to the stick o' the paint:

We've chivied the Naga an' Looshai, we've
give the Afreedeeman fits,
For we fancies ourselves at two thousand, we
guns that are built in two bits—'Tss!
'Tss!
For you all love the screw-guns, etc.

If a man doesn't work, why, we drills 'im, an'
teaches 'im 'ow to behave;
If a beggar can't march, why, we kills 'im an'
rattles 'im into 'is grave.
You've got to stand up to our business an'
spring without snatchin' or fuss.
D'you say that you sweat with the field-guns?
By God, you must lather with us—'Tss!
'Tss!
For you all love the screw-guns, etc.

The eagles is screamin' around us, the river's
a-moanin' below,
We're clear o' the pine an' the oak-scrub, we're
out on the rocks an' the snow,
An' the wind is as thin as a whip-lash what
carries away to the plains
The rattle an' stamp o' the lead-mules—the
jinglety-jink o' the chains—'Tss! 'Tss!
For you all love the screw-guns, etc.

There's a wheel on the Horns o' the Mornin',
an' a wheel on the edge o' the Pit,
An' a drop into nothin' beneath you as straight
as a beggar can spit:
With the sweat runnin' out o' your shirt-
sleeves,
An' the sun off the snow in your face,
An' 'arf o' the men on the drag-ropes to hold
the old gun in 'er place—'Tss! 'Tss!
For you all love the screw-guns, etc.

Smokin' my pipe on the mountings, sniffin' the
mornin' cool,
I climbs in my old brown gaiters along o' my
old brown mule.
The monkey can say what our road was—the
wild-goat 'e knows where we passed.
Stand easy, you long-eared old darlin's! Out
drag-ropes! With shrapnel! Hold fast—
'Tss! 'Tss!

For you all love the screw-guns—the
screw-guns they all love you!
So when we take tea with a few guns,
o' course you will know what to do—
hoo! hoo!

Just send in your Chief and surrender
—it's worse if you fights or you runs:
You may hide in the caves, they'll be only your graves, but you can't get away from the guns!

GUNGA DIN

You may talk o' gin and beer
When you're quartered safe out 'ere,
An' you're sent to penny-fights an' Aldershot it;
But when it comes to slaughter
You will do your work on water,
An' you'll lick the bloomin' boots of 'im that's got it,
Now in Injia's sunny clime,
Where I used to spend my time
A-servin' of 'Er Majesty the Queen,
Of all them blackfaced crew
The finest man I knew
Was our regimental bhisti, Gunga Din.

He was "Din! Din! Din!
You limping lump o' brick-dust, Gunga Din!
Hi! slippery hitherao!
Water! get it! Panee lao![1]
You squidgy-nosed old idol, Gunga Din."

The uniform 'e wore
Was nothin' much before,

[1]Bring water swiftly.

An' rather less than 'arf o' that be'ind,
For a piece o' twisty rag
An' a goatskin water-bag
Was all the field-equipment 'e could find.
When the sweatin' troop-train lay
In a sidin' through the day,
Where the 'eat would make your bloomin' eyebrows crawl,
We shouted, "Harry By!"[1]
Till our throats were bricky-dry,
Then we wopped 'im cause 'e couldn't serve us all.

It was "Din! Din! Din!
You 'eathen, where the mischief 'ave you been?
You put some juldee[2] in it
Or I'll marrow you this minute[3]
If you don't fill up my helmet, Gunga Din!"

'E would dot an' carry one
Till the longest day was done;
An 'e didn't seem to know the use o' fear.
If we charged or broke or cut,
You could bet your bloomin' nut,
'E'd be waitin' fifty paces right flank rear.
With 'is mussick[4] on 'is back,

[1] Mr. Atkins' equivalent for "O brother."
[2] Be quick.
[3] Hit you.
[4] Water skin.

'E would skip with our attack,
An' watch us till the bugles made "Retire,"
An' for all 'is dirty 'ide
'E was white, clear white, inside
When 'e went to tend the wounded under fire!
It was "Din! Din! Din!"
With the bullets kickin' dust-spots on the green.
When the cartridges ran out,
You could hear the front-files shout,
"Hi! ammunition-mules an' Gunga Din!"

I shan't forgit the night
When I dropped be'ind the fight
With a bullet where my belt-plate should 'a' been.
I was chokin' mad with thirst,
An' the man that spied me first
Was our good old grinnin', gruntin' Gunga Din.
'E lifted up my 'ead,
An' he plugged me where I bled,
An' 'e guv me 'arf-a-pint o' water-green:
It was crawlin' and it stunk,
But of all the drinks I've drunk,
I'm gratefullest to one from Gunga Din.
It was "Din! Din! Din!"

'Ere's a beggar with a bullet through 'is spleen;
'E's chawin' up the ground,
An' 'e's kickin' all around:
For Gawd's sake git the water, Gunga Din!

'E carried me away
To where a dooli lay,
An' a bullet come an' drilled the beggar clean.
'E put me safe inside,
An' just before 'e died:
"I hope you liked your drink," sez Gunga Din.
So I'll meet 'im later on
At the place where 'e is gone—
Where it's always double drill and no canteen;
'E'll be squattin' on the coals,
Givin' drink to poor damned souls,
An' I'll get a swig in hell from Gunga Din!
Yes, Din! Din! Din!
You Lazarushian-leather Gunga-Din!
Though I've belted you and flayed you,
By the living Gawd that made you,
You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din!

OONTS

(NORTHERN INDIA TRANSPORT TRAIN)

Wot makes the soldier's 'eart to penk, wot
makes him to perspire?
It isn't standin' up to charge nor lyin' down to
fire;
But it's everlastin' waitin' on a everlastin' road
For the commissariat camel an' 'is commis-
sariat load.
O the oont,[1] O the oont, O the commis-
sariat oont!
With 'is silly neck a-bobbin' like a
basket full o' snakes;
We packs 'im like an idol, an' you
ought to 'ear 'im grunt,
An' when we gets 'im loaded up 'is
blessed girth-rope breaks.

Wot makes the rear-guard swear so 'ard when
night is drorin' in,
An' every native follower is shiverin' for 'is
skin?

[1] Camel—*oo* is pronounced like *u* in "bull," but by Mr. Atkins to rhyme with "Front."

It ain't the chanst o' being rushed by Paythans
from the 'ills,
It's the commissariat camel puttin' on 'is
bloomin' frills!
O the oont, O the oont, O the hairy,
scary oont!
A-trippin' over tent-ropes when
we've got the night alarm!
We socks 'im with a stretcher-pole, an'
'eads 'im off in front,
An' when we've saved 'is bloomin'
life 'e chaws our bloomin' arm.

The 'orse 'e knows above a bit, the bullock's
but a fool,
The elephant's a gentleman, the battery-mule's
a mule;
But the commissariat cam-u-el, when all is said
an' done,
'E's a devil an' a ostrich an' a orphan-child in
one.
O the oont, O the oont, O the Gawd-
forsaken oont!
The lumpy-'umpy 'ummin'-bird a-
singin' where 'e lies,
'E's blocked the whole division from
the rear-guard to the front,
An' when we get him up again—the
beggar goes an' dies!

'E'll gall an' chafe an' lame an' fight—'e smells most awful vile;
'E'll lose 'isself forever if you let 'im stray a mile;
E's game to graze the 'ole day long an' 'owl the 'ole night through,
An' when 'e comes to greasy ground 'e splits 'issel in two.
O the oont, O the oont, O the floppin', droppin' oont!
When 'is long legs give from under an' 'is meltin' eye is dim,
The tribes is up be'ind us, and the tribes is out in front—
It ain't no jam for Tommy, but it's kites an' crows for 'im.

So when the cruel march is done, an' when the roads is blind,
An' when we sees the camp in front an' 'ears the shots be'ind,
Ho then we strips 'is saddle off, and all 'is woes is past:
'E thinks on us that used 'im so, and gets revenge at last.
O the oont, O the oont, O the floatin', bloatin' oont!

The late lamented camel in the
water-cut 'e lies;
We keeps a mile behind 'im an' we
keeps a mile in front,
But 'e gets into the drinkin'-casks,
and then o' course we dies.

LOOT.

If you've ever stole a pheasant-egg be'ind the keeper's back,
If you've ever snigged the washin' from the line,
If you've ever crammed a gander in your bloomin' 'aversack,
You will understand this little song o' mine.
But the service rules are 'ard, and from such we are debarred,
For the same with English morals does not suit.
(*Cornet:* Toot! toot!)
W'y, they call a man a robber if 'e stuffs 'is marchin' clobber
With the—
(*Chorus.*) Loo! loo! Lulu! lulu! Loo! loo!
Loot! loot! loot!
Ow the loot!
Bloomin' loot!
That's the thing to make the boys git up an' shoot!
It's the same with dogs an' men,
If you'd make 'em come again

Clap 'em forward with a Loo! loo! Lulu!
Loot!
(*ff*) Whoopee! Tear 'im, puppy! Loo! loo!
Lulu! Loot! loot! loot!

If you've knocked a nigger edgeways when 'e's
thrustin' for your life,
You must leave 'im very careful where 'e
fell;
An' may thank your stars an' gaiters if you
didn't feel 'is knife
That you ain't told off to bury 'im as well.
Then the sweatin' Tommies wonder as they
spade the beggars under
Why lootin' should be entered as a crime;
So if my song you'll 'ear, I will learn you plain
an' clear
'Ow to pay yourself for fightin' overtime
(*Chorus.*) With the loot, etc.

Now remember when you're 'acking round a
gilded Burma god
That 'is eyes is very often precious stones;
An' if you treat a nigger to a dose o' cleanin'-
rod
'E's like to show you everything 'e owns.
When 'e won't prodooce no more, pour some
water on the floor
Where you 'ear it answer 'ollow to the boot
(*Cornet:* Toot! toot!)—

When the ground begins to sink, shove your
baynick down the chink,
An' you're sure to touch the—
(*Chorus.*) Loo! loo! Lulu! Loot! loot! loot!
Ow the loot! etc.

When from 'ouse to 'ouse you're 'unting, you
must always work in pairs—
It 'alves the gain, but safer you will find—
For a single man gets bottled on them twisty-
wisty stairs,
An' a woman comes and clobs 'im from
be'ind.
When you've turned 'em inside out, an' it
seems beyond a doubt
As if there weren't enough to dust a flute
(*Cornet:* Toot! toot!)—
Before you sling your 'ook, at the 'ouse-tops
take a look,
For it's underneath the tiles they 'ide the
loot.
(*Chorus.*) Ow the loot, etc.

You can mostly square a Sergint an' a Quar-
ter-master too,
If you only take the proper way to go;
I could never keep my pickin's, but I've learned
you all I knew—
An' don't you never say I told you so.

An' now I'll bid good-bye, for I'm gettin' rather dry,
An' I see another tunin' up to toot (*Cornet:* Toot! toot!)—
So 'ere's good-luck to those that wears the Widow's clo'es,
An' the Devil send 'em all they want o' loot!
(*Chorus.*) Yes, the loot,
Bloomin' loot.
In the tunic an' the mess-tin an' the boot!
It's the same with dogs an' men,
If you'd make 'em come again
(*fff*) Whoop 'em forward with a Loo! loo!
Lulu! Loot! loot! loot!
Heeya! Sick 'im, puppy! Loo! loo! Lulu!
Loot! loot! loot!

"SNARLEYOW"

THIS 'appened in a battle to a batt'ry of the corps
Which is first among the women an' amazin' first in war;
An' what the bloomin' battle was I don't remember now,
But Two's off-lead 'e answered to the name o' *Snarleyow.*

Down in the Infantry, nobody cares;
Down in the Cavalry, Colonel e' swears;
But down in the lead with the wheel at the flog
Turns the bold Bombardier to a little whipped dog!

They was movin' into action, they was needed very sore,
To learn a little schoolin' to a native army corps,
They 'ad nipped against an uphill, they was tuckin' down the brow,
When a tricky, trundlin' round-shot gives the knock to *Snarleyow.*

They cut 'im loose an' left 'im—'e was almost
tore in two—
But he tried to follow after as a well-trained
'orse should do,
'E went an' fouled the limber, an' the Driver's
Brother squeals:
"Pull up, pull up for *Snarleyow*—'is 'ead's be-
tween 'is 'eels!"

The Driver 'umped 'is shoulder, for the wheels
was goin' round,
An' there aren't no "Stop, conductor!" when a
batt'ry's changin' ground;
Sez 'e: "I broke the beggar in, an' very sad I
feels,
But I couldn't pull up, not for *you*—your 'ead
between your 'eels!"

'E 'adn't 'ardly spoke the word, before a drop-
pin' shell
A little right the batt'ry an' between the sec-
tions fell;
An' when the smoke 'ad cleared away, before
the limber wheels,
There lay the Driver's Brother with 'is 'ead be-
tween 'is 'eels.

Then sez the Driver's Brother, an' 'is words
was very plain,

"For Gawd's own sake get over me, an' put
me out o' pain."
They saw 'is wounds was mortial, an' they
judged that it was best,
So they took an' drove the limber straight
across 'is back an' chest.

The Driver 'e give nothin' 'cept a little cough-
in' grunt,
But 'e swung 'is 'orses 'andsome when it came
to "Action front!"
An' if one wheel was juicy, you may lay your
Monday head
'Twas jucier for the niggers when the case be-
gun to spread.

The moril of this story, it is plainly to be seen;
You 'avn't got no families when servin' of the
Queen—
You 'avn't got no brothers, fathers, sisters,
wives, or sons—
If you want to win your battles take an' work
your bloomin' guns!

Down in the Infantry, nobody cares;
Down in the Cavalry, Colonel 'e swears;
But down in the lead with the wheel at
the flog
Turns the bold Bombardier to a little
whipped dog!

THE WIDOW AT WINDSOR

'Ave you 'eard 'o the Widow at Windsor
With a hairy gold crown on 'er 'ead?
She 'as ships on the foam—she 'as millions at 'ome,
An' she pays us poor beggars in red.
(Ow, poor beggars in red!)
There's 'er nick on the cavalry 'orses,
There's 'er mark on the medical stores—
An' 'er troopers you'll find with a fair wind be'ind
That takes us to various wars.
(Poor beggars!—barbarious wars!)

Then 'ere's to the Widow at Windsor,
An' 'ere's to the stores an' the guns,
The men an' the 'orses what make up the forces
O' Missis Victorier's sons.
(Poor beggars! Victorier's sons!)

Walk wide o' the Widow at Windsor,
For 'alf o' Creation she owns:
We 'ave bought 'er the same with the sword an' the flame,
An' we've salted it down with our bones.

(Poor beggars!—it's blue with our bones!)
Hands off o' the sons of the Widow,
Hands off o' the goods in 'er shop,
For the Kings must come down an' the Emperors frown
When the Widow at Windsor says "Stop!"
(Poor beggars!—we're sent to say "Stop!")

Then 'ere's to the Lodge o' the Widow,
From the Pole to the Tropics it runs—
To the Lodge that we tile with the rank an' the file,
An' open in form with the guns.
(Poor beggars!—it's always they guns!)

We 'ave 'eard o' the Widow at Windsor,
It's safest to leave 'er alone:
For 'er sentries we stand by the sea an' the land
Wherever the bugles are blown.
(Poor beggars!—an' don't we get blown!)
Take o'ld o' the Wings o' the Mornin',
An' flop round the earth till you're dead;

But you won't get away from the tune that
they play
To the bloomin' old Rag over'ead.
(Poor beggars!—it's 'ot over'ead!)

Then 'ere's to the sons o' the Widow
Wherever, 'owever they roam.
'Ere's all they desire, an' if they require
A speedy return to their 'ome.
(Poor beggars!—they'll never see
'ome!)

BELTS

THERE was a row in Silver Street that's near
to Dublin Quay,
Between an Irish regiment an' English cav-
alree;
It started at Revelly an' it lasted on till dark:
The first man dropped at Harrison's, the last
fornist the Park.

For it was "Belts, belts, belts, an' that's
one for you!"
An' it was "Belts, belts, belts, an' that's
done for you!"
O buckle an' tongue
Was the song that we sung
From Harrison's down to the Park!

There was a row in Silver Street—the regi-
ments was out,
They called us "Delhi Rebels," an' we an-
swered "Threes about!"
That drew them like a hornet's nest—we met
them good an' large,
The English at the double an' the Irish at the
charge.
Then it was: Belts—

There was a row in Silver Street—an' I was in it too;
We passed the time o' day, an' then the belts went whirraru!
I misremember what occurred, but subsequint the storm
A *Freeman's Journal Supplemint* was all my uniform.
O it was: Belts—

There was a row in Silver Street—they sent the Polis there,
The English were too drunk to know, the Irish didn't care;
But when they grew impertinint we simultaneous rose,
Till half o' them was Liffey mud an' half was tatthered clo'es.
For it was: Belts—

There was a row in Silver Street—it might ha' raged till now,
But some one drew his side-arm clear, an' nobody knew how;
'Twas Hogan took the point an' dropped; we saw the red blood run:
An' so we all was murderers that started out in fun.
While it was: Belts—

There was a row in Silver Street—but that put down the shine,
Wid each man whisperin' to his next: " 'Twas never work o' mine!"
We went away like beaten dogs, an' down the street we bore him,
The poor dumb corpse that couldn't tell the bhoys were sorry for him.
When it was: Belts—

There was a row in Silver Street—it isn't over yet
For half of us are under guard wid punishments to get;
'Tis all a merricle to me as in the Clink I lie:
There was a row in Silver Street—begob, I wonder why!
But it was "Belts, belts, belts, an' that's one for you!"
An' it was "Belts, belts, belts, an' that's done for you!"
O buckle and tongue
Was the song that we sung
From Harrison's down to the Park!

THE YOUNG BRITISH SOLDIER

When the 'arf-made recruity goes out to the East
'E acts like a babe an' 'e drinks like a beast,
An' 'e wonders because 'e is frequent deceased
Ere 'e's fit to serve as a soldier,
Serve, serve, serve as a soldier,
Serve, serve, serve as a soldier,
Serve, serve, serve as a soldier,
So-oldier *of* the Queen!

Now all you recruities what's drafted to-day,
You shut up your rag-box an' 'ark to my lay,
An' I'll sing you a soldier as far as I may:
A soldier what's fit for a soldier.
Fit, fit, fit for a soldier.

First mind you steer clear o' the grog-sellers' huts,
For they sell you Fixed Bay'nets that rots out your guts—
Ay, drink that 'ud eat the live steel from your butts—
An' it's bad for the young British soldier.
Bad, bad, bad for the soldier.

When the cholera comes—as it will past a doubt—
Keep out of the wet and don't go on the shout,
For the sickness gets in as the liquor dies out,
An' it crumples the young British soldier.
Crum-, crum-, crumples the soldier. . .

But the worst o' your foes is the sun over'ead:
You *must* wear your 'elmet for all that is said:
If 'e finds you uncovered 'e'll knock you down dead
An' you'll die like a fool of a soldier.
Fool, fool, fool of a soldier. . .

If you're cast for fatigue by a sergeant unkind
Don't grouse like a woman nor crack on nor blind;
Be handy and civil and then you will find
That it's beer for the young British soldier.
Beer, beer, beer for the soldier. . .

Now, if you must marry, take care she is old—
A troop-sergeant's widow's the nicest I'm told—
For beauty won't help if your rations is cold,
Nor love ain't enough for a soldier.
'Nough, 'nough, 'nough for a soldier. . .

If the wife should go wrong with a comrade, be loth
To shoot when you catch 'em—you'll swing, on my oath!—
Make 'im take 'er and keep 'er: that's Hell for them both,
An' you're shut o' the curse of a soldier.
Curse, curse, curse o' a soldier. . . .

When first under fire an' you're wishful to duck
Don't look nor take 'eed at the man that is struck
Be thankful you're livin', and trust to your luck
And march to your front like a soldier.
Front, front, front like a soldier. . .

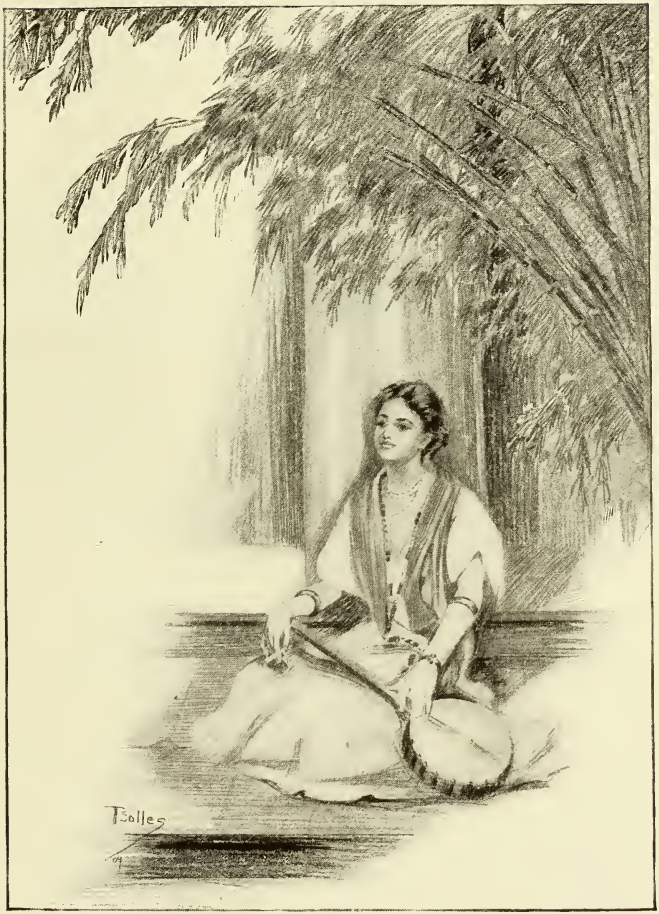
When 'arf of your bullets fly wide in the ditch,
Don't call your Martini a cross-eyed old bitch;
She's human as you are—you treat her as sich,
An' she'll fight for the young British soldier.
Fight, fight, fight for the soldier. . . .

When shakin' their bustles like ladies so fine,
The guns o' the enemy wheel into line;
Shoot low at the limbers an' don't mind the shine,

For noise never startles the soldier.
Start-, start-, startles the soldier. . . .

If your officer's dead and the sergeants look white,
Remember it's ruin to run from a fight:
So take open order, lie down, and sit tight,
And wait for supports like a soldier.
Wait, wait, wait like a soldier. . . .

When you're wounded and left on Afghanistan's plains,
And the women come out to cut up what remains,
Jest roll to your rifle and blow out your brains
An' go to your Gawd like a soldier.
Go, go, go like a soldier,
Go, go, go like a soldier,
Go, go, go like a soldier,
So-oldier *of* the Queen!


Bolles

MANDALAY

By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,
There's a Burma girl a-settin', and I know she thinks o' me;
For the wind is in the palm-trees, and the temple-bells they say:
"Come you back, you British soldier; come you back to Mandalay!"

Come you back to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay:
Can't you 'ear their paddles chunkin' from Rangoon to Mandalay?
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay!

'Er petticoat was yaller an' 'er little cap was green,
An' 'er name was Supi-yaw-lat—jes' the same as Theebaw's Queen,

An' I seed her first a-smokin' of a whackin' white cheroot,
An'-a-wastin' Christian kisses on an 'eathen idol's foot:

Bloomin' idol made o' mud—
What they called the Great Gawd Budd—
Plucky lot she cared for idols when I kissed 'er where she stud!
On the road to Mandalay, etc.

When the mist was on the rice-fields an' the sun was droppin' slow,
She'd git 'er little banjo an' she'd sing "*Kulla-lo-lo!*"
With 'er arm upon my shoulder an' 'er cheek agin my cheek
We useter watch the steamers an' the *hathis* pilin' teak.

Elephints a-pilin' teak
In the sludgy, squdgy creek,
Where the silence 'ung that 'eavy you was 'arf afraid to speak!
On the road to Mandalay, etc.

But that's all shove be'ind me—long ago an' fur away,
An' there ain't no 'busses runnin' from the Bank to Mandalay;

An' I'm learnin' 'ere in London what the ten-year soldier tells:
"If you've 'eard the East a-callin', you won't never 'eed naught else."

No! you won't 'eed nothin' else
But them spicy garlic smells,
An' the sunshine an' the palm-trees an' the tinkly temple-bells;
On the road to Mandalay, etc.

I am sick o' wastin' leather on these gritty pavin'-stones,
An' the blasted Henglish drizzle wakes the fever in my bones;
Tho' I walks with fifty 'ousemaids outer Chelsea to the Strand,
An' they talks a lot o' lovin,' but wot do they understand?

Beefy face an' grubby 'and—
Law! wot do they understand?
I've a neater, sweeter maiden in a cleaner, greener land!
On the road to Mandalay, etc.

Ship me somewheres east of Suez, where the best is like the worst,
Where there aren't no Ten Commandments an' a man can raise a thirst;

For the temple-bells are callin', and it's there
that I would be—
By the old Moulmein Pagoda, looking lazy at
the sea;

On the road to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay,
With our sick beneath the awnings when
we went to Mandalay!
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer
China 'crost the Bay!

TROOPIN'

(OUR ARMY IN THE EAST)

TROOPIN', troopin', troopin' to the sea:
'Ere's September come again—the six-year men are free.
O leave the dead be'ind us, for they cannot come away
To where the ship's a-coalin' up that takes us 'ome to-day.

We're goin' 'ome, we're goin' 'ome,
Our ship is *at* the shore,
An' you must pack your 'aversack,
For we won't come back no more.
Ho, don't you grieve for me,
My lovely Mary-Ann,
For I'll marry you yit on a fourp'ny bit
As a time-expired man!

The Malabar's in 'arbor with the Jumner at 'er tail,
An' the time-expired's waitin' of 'is orders for to sail.

Ho! the weary waitin' when on Khyber 'ills we lay,
But the time-expired's waitin' of 'is orders 'ome to-day.

They'll turn us out at Portsmouth wharf in cold an' wet an' rain,
All wearin' Injian cotton kit, but we will not complain;
They'll kill us of pneumonia—for that's their little way—
But damn the chills and fever, men, we're goin' 'ome to-day!

Troopin', troopin', winter's round again!
See the new draf's pourin' in for the old campaign;
Ho, you poor recruities, but you've got to earn your pay—
What's the last from Lunnon, lads? We're goin' there to-day.

Troopin', troopin', give another cheer—
'Ere's to English women an' a quart of English beer;
The Colonel an' the regiment an' all who've got to stay,
Gawd's mercy strike 'em gentle— Whoop! we're goin' 'ome to-day.

We're goin' 'ome, we're goin' 'ome,
Our ship is at the shore,
An' you must pack your 'aversack,
For we won't come back no more.
Ho, don't you grieve for me,
My lovely Mary-Ann,
For I'll marry you yit on a fourp'ny bit
As a time-expired man.

FORD O' KABUL RIVER

KABUL town's by Kabul river—
  Blow the bugle, draw the sword—
There I lef' my mate forever,
  Wet an' drippin' by the ford.
    Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,
      Ford o' Kabul river in the dark!
    There's the river up and brimmin', an' there's 'arf a squadron swimmin'
      'Cross the ford o' Kabul river in the dark.

Kabul town's a blasted place—
  Blow the bugle, draw the sword—
'Strewth I sha'n't forget 'is face
  Wet an' drippin' by the ford!
    Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,
      Ford o' Kabul river in the dark!
    Keep the crossing-stakes beside you, an' they will surely guide you
      'Cross the ford o' Kabul river in the dark.

Kabul town is sun and dust—
Blow the bugle, draw the sword—
I'd ha' sooner drownded fust
'Stead of 'im beside the ford.
Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,
Ford o' Kabul river in the dark!
You can 'ear the 'orses threshin', you can 'ear the men a-splashin',
'Cross the ford o' Kabul river in the dark.

Kabul town was ours to take—
Blow the bugle, draw the sword—
I'd ha' left it for 'is sake—
'Im that left me by the ford.
Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,
Ford o' Kabul river in the dark!
It's none so bloomin' dry there; ain't you never comin' nigh there,
'Cross the ford o' Kabul river in the dark.

Kabul town'll go to hell—
Blow the bugle, draw the sword—
'For I see him 'live an' well—
'Im the best beside the ford.
Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,
Ford o' Kabul river in the dark!

Gawd 'elp 'em if they blunder, for their
boots'll pull 'em under,
By the ford o' Kabul river in the dark.

Turn your 'orse from Kabul town—
Blow the bugle, draw the sword—
'Im an' 'arf my troop is down,
Down an' drownded by the ford.
Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,
Ford o' Kabul river in the dark!
There's the river low an' fallin', but it ain't
no use o' callin'
'Cross the ford o' Kabul river in the
dark.

ROUTE-MARCHIN'

WE'RE marchin' on relief over Injia's sunny plains,
A little front o' Christmas time an' just be'ind the Rains,
Ho! get away, you bullock-man, you've 'eard the bugle blowed,
There's a regiment a-comin' down the Grand Trunk Road;
With its best foot first
And the road a-sliding past,
An' every bloomin' campin'-ground exactly like the last;
While the Big Drum says,
With 'is *"rowdy-dowdy-dow!"*—
"Kiko kissywarsti don't you *hamsher argy-jow?"*

Oh, there's them Injian temples to admire when you see,
There's the peacock round the corner an' the monkey up the tree,

An' there's that rummy silver grass a-wavin' in
the wind,
An' the old Grand Trunk a trailin' like a rifle-
sling be'ind.
While it's best foot first, etc.

At half-past five's Revelly, an' our tents they
down must come,
Like a lot of button mushrooms when you pick
'em up at 'ome.
But it's over in a minute, an' at six the column
starts,
While the women and the kiddies sit an' shiver
in the carts.
And it's best foot first, etc.

Oh, then it's open order, an' we lights our pipes
an' sings,
An' we talks about our rations an' a lot of
other things,
And we thinks o' friends in England, an' we
wonders what they're at,
An' 'ow they would admire for to hear us sling
the *bat*.[1]
An' it's best foot first, etc.

It's none so bad o' Sunday, when you're lyin'
at your ease,

[1] Thomas's first and firmest conviction is that he is a profound Orientalist and a fluent speaker of Hindustani. As a matter of fact he depends largely on the sign-language.

To watch the kites a-wheelin' round them
feather-'eaded trees,
For although there ain't no women yet there
ain't no barrick-yards,
So the orficers goes shootin' an' the men they
plays at cards.
Till it's best foot first, etc.

So 'ark an' 'eed you rookies, which is always
grumblin' sore,
There's worser things than marchin' from Um-
balla to Cawnpore;
And if your 'eels are blistered an' they feels to
'urt like 'ell
You drop some tallow in your socks an' that
will make 'em well.
For it's best foot first, etc.

We're marchin' on relief over Injia's coral
strand,
Eight 'undred fightin' Englishmen, the Col-
onel, *and* the Band.
Ho! get away, you bullock-man, you've 'eard
the bugle blowed,
There's a regiment a-comin' down the Grand
Trunk Road.

With its best foot first
And the road a-slidin' past,
An' every bloomin' campin'-ground exactly like the last;
While the Big Drum says,
With 'is *"rowdy-dowdy-dow!"*—
"Kiko kissywarsti don't you *hamsher argy-jow?"* [1]

[1] Why don't you get on?

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

I have eaten your bread and salt,
I have drunk your water and wine,
The deaths ye died I have watched beside,
And the lives that ye led were mine.

Was there aught that I did not share
In vigil or toil or ease,—
One joy or woe that I did not know,
Dear hearts across the seas?

I have written the tale of our life
For a sheltered people's mirth,
In jesting guise—but ye are wise,
And ye know what the jest is worth.

GENERAL SUMMARY

We are very slightly changed
From the semi-apes who ranged
India's prehistoric clay;
Whoso drew the longest bow,
Ran his brother down, you know,
As we run men down to-day.

"Dowb," the first of all his race,
Met the Mammoth face to face
On the lake or in the cave,
Stole the steadiest canoe,
Ate the quarry others slew,
Died—and took the finest grave.

When they scratched the reindeer-bone,
Some one made the sketch his own,
Filched it from the artist—then,
Even as it does in this age.
Won a simple viceroy's praise
Through the toil of other men.

Ere they hewed the Sphinx's visage
Favoritism governed kissage,
Even in those early days,

Who shall doubt the secret hid
Under Cheops' pyramid
Was that the contractor did
  Cheops out of several millions?
Or that Joseph's sudden rise
To Comptroller of Supplies
Was a fraud of monstrous size
  On King Pharaoh's swart Civilians?

Thus, the artless songs I sing
Do not deal with anything
  New or never said before.
As it was in the beginning,
Is to-day official sinning,
  And shall be forevermore.

ARMY HEADQUARTERS

Old is the song that I sing—
Old as my unpaid bills—
Old as the chicken that *kitmutgars* bring
Men at dak-bungalows—old as the Hills.

AHASUERUS JENKINS of the "Operatic Own"
Was dowered with a tenor voice of *super*-Santley tone.
His views on equitation were, perhaps, a trifle queer;
He had no seat worth mentioning, but oh! he had an ear.

He clubbed his wretched company a dozen times a day,
He used to quit his charger in a parabolic way,
His method of saluting was the joy of all beholders,
But Ahasuerus Jenkins had a head upon his shoulders.

He took two months to Simla when the year was at the spring,
And underneath the deodars eternally did sing.

He warbled like a *bulbul,* but particularly at
Cornelia Agrippina who was musical and fat.
She controlled a humble husband, who, in turn,
controlled a Dept.,
Where Cornelia Agrippina's human singing-
birds were kept
From April to October on a plump retaining
fee,
Supplied, of course, *per mensem,* by the Indian
Treasury.

Cornelia used to sing with him, and Jenkins
used to play;
He praised unblushingly her notes, for he was
false as they:
So when the winds of April turned the bud-
ding roses brown,
Cornelia told her husband: "Tom, you mustn't
send him down."

They haled him from his regiment which
didn't much regret him;
They found for him an office-stool, and on that
stool they set him,
To play with maps and catalogues three idle
hours a day,
And draw his plump retaining fee—which
means his double pay.

Now, ever after dinner, when the coffee-cups
are brought,
Ahasuerus waileth o'er the grand pianoforte;
And, thanks to fair Cornelia, his fame hath
waxen great,
And Ahasuerus Jenkins is a power in the State.

STUDY OF AN ELEVATION, IN INDIAN INK

This ditty is a string of lies.
But—how the deuce did Gubbins rise?

Potiphar Gubbins, C. E.,
Stands at the top of the tree;
And I muse in my bed on the reasons that led
To the hoisting of Potiphar G.

Potiphar Gubbins, C. E.,
Is seven years junior to Me;
Each bridge that he makes he either buckles or breaks,
And his work is as rough as he.

Potiphar Gubbins, C. E.,
Is coarse as a chimpanzee;
And I can't understand why you gave him your hand,
Lovely Mehitabel Lee.

Potiphar Gubbins, C. E.,
Is dear to the Powers that Be;
For They bow and They smile in an affable style
Which is seldom accorded to Me.

Potiphar Gubbins, C. E.,
Is certain as certain can be
Of a highly-paid post which is claimed by a host
Of seniors—including Me.

Careless and lazy is he,
Greatly inferior to Me.
What is the spell that you manage so well
Commonplace Potiphar G.?

Lovely Mehitabel Lee,
Let me inquire of thee,
Should I have riz to what Potiphar is,
Hadst thou been mated to Me?

A LEGEND OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE

This is the reason why Rustum Beg,
Rajah of Kolazai,
Drinketh the "simpkin" and brandy peg,
Maketh the money to fly,
Vexeth a Government, tender and kind,
Also—but this is a detail—blind.

Rustum Beg of Kolazai—slightly backward native state—
Lusted for a C. S. I.,—so began to sanitate.
Built a Jail and Hospital—nearly built a City drain—
Till his faithful subjects all thought their ruler was insane.

Strange departures made he then—yea, Departments stranger still,
Half a dozen Englishmen helped the Rajah with a will,
Talked of noble aims and high, hinted of a future fine
For the state of Kolazai, on a strictly Western line.

Rajah Rustum held his peace; lowered octroi
dues a half;
Organized a State Police; purified the Civil
Staff;
Settled cess and tax afresh in a very liberal
way;
Cut temptations of the flesh—also cut the
Bukhshi's pay;

Roused his Secretariat to a fine Mahratta fury,
By a Hookum hinting at supervision of *dasturi;*
Turned the State of Kolazai very nearly up-
side-down;
When the end of May was nigh, waited his
achievement crown.

Then the Birthday Honors came. Sad to state
and sad to see,
Stood against the Rajah's name nothing more
than *C. I. E.!*

* * * * * *

Things were lively for a week in the State of
Kolazai.
Even now the people speak of that time regret-
fully.

How he disendowed the jail—stopped at once
the City drain;
Turned to beauty fair and frail—got his senses
back again;
Doubled taxes, cesses, all; cleared away each
new-built *thana;*
Turned the two-lakh Hospital into a superb
Zenana;

Heaped upon the Bukhshi Sahib wealth and
honors manifold;
Clad himself in Eastern garb—squeezed his
people as of old.
Happy, happy Kolazai! Never more will Rus-
tum Beg
Play to catch the viceroy's eye. He prefers the
"simpkin" peg.

THE STORY OF URIAH

"Now there were two men in one city; the one rich and the other poor."

JACK BARRETT went to Quetta
  Because they told him to.
He left his wife at Simla
  On three-fourths his monthly screw:
Jack Barrett died at Quetta
  Ere the next month's pay he drew.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta.
  He didn't understand
The reason of his transfer
  From the pleasant mountain-land:
The season was September,
  And it killed him out of hand.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta,
  And there gave up the ghost,
Attempting two men's duty
  In that very healthy post;
And Mrs. Barrett mourned for him
  Five lively months at most.

Jack Barrett's bones at Quetta
  Enjoy profound repose;
But I shouldn't be astonished
  If *now* his spirit knows
The reason of his transfer
  From the Himalayan snows.

And, when the last Great Bugle Call
  Adown the Hurnai throbs,
When the last grim joke is entered
In the big black Book of Jobs,
And Quetta graveyards give again
  Their victims to the air,
I shouldn't like to be the man
Who sent Jack Barrett there.

THE POST THAT FITTED

Though tangled and twisted the course of true love,
This ditty explains
No tangle's so tangled it cannot improve
If the Lover has brains.

Ere the steamer bore him Eastward, Sleary
was engaged to marry
An attractive girl at Tunbridge, whom he
called "my little Carrie."
Sleary's pay was very modest; Sleary was the
other way.
Who can cook a two-plate dinner on eight
paltry dibs a day?

Long he pondered o'er the question in his
scantly furnished quarters—
Then proposed to Minnie Boffkin, eldest of
Judge Boffkin's daughters.
Certainly an impecunious Subaltern was not a
catch,
But the Boffkins knew that Minnie mightn't
make another match.

So they recognized the business, and, to feed and clothe the bride,
Got him made a Something Something somewhere on the Bombay side.
Anyhow, the billet carried pay enough for him to marry—
As the artless Sleary put it: "Just the thing for me and Carrie."

Did he, therefore, jilt Miss Boffkin—impulse of a baser mind?
No! He started epileptic fits of an appalling kind.
(Of his *modus operandi* only this much I could gather:
"Pears' shaving sticks give you little taste and lots of lather.")

Frequently in public places his affliction used to smite
Sleary with distressing vigor—always in the Boffkins' sight.
Ere a week was over Minnie weepingly returned his ring,
Told him his "unhappy weakness" stopped all thought of marrying.

Sleary bore the information with a chastened
holy joy,—
Epileptic fits don't matter in Political em-
ploy,—
Wired three short words to Carrie—took his
ticket, packed his kit—
Bade farewell to Minnie Boffkin in one last,
long, lingering fit.

Four weeks later, Carrie Sleary read—and
laughed until she wept—
Mrs. Boffkin's warning letter on the "wretched
epilept."
Year by year, in pious patience, vengeful Mrs.
Boffkin sits
Waiting for the Sleary babies to develop
Sleary's fits.

PUBLIC WASTE

Walpole talks of "a man and his price."
List to a ditty queer—
The sale of a Deputy-Acting-Vice-
Resident-Engineer,
Bought like a bullock, hoof and hide,
By the Little Tin Gods on the Mountain Side.

By the Laws of the Family Circle 'tis written in letters of brass
That only a Colonel from Chatham can manage the Railways of State,
Because of the gold on his breeks, and the subjects wherein he must pass:
Because in all matters that deal not with Railways his knowledge is great.

Now Exeter Battleby Tring had labored from boyhood to eld
On the Lines of the East and the West, and eke of the North and South;
Many Lines had he built and surveyed—important the posts which he held;
And the Lords of the Iron Horse were dumb when he opened his mouth.

Black as the raven his garb, and his heresies
jettier still—
Hinting that Railways required lifetimes of
study and knowledge;
Never clanked sword by his side—Vauban he
knew not, nor drill—
Nor was his name on the list of the men who
had passed through the "College."

Wherefore the Little Tin Gods harried their
little tin souls,
Seeing he came not from Chatham, jingled no
spurs at his heels,
Knowing that, nevertheless, was he first on the
Government rolls
For the billet of "Railway Instructor to Little
Tin Gods on Wheels."

Letters not seldom they wrote him, "having
the honor to state,"
It would be better for all men if he were laid on
the shelf:
Much would accrue to his bank-book, and he
consented to wait
Until the Little Tin Gods built him a berth for
himself.

"Special, well paid, and exempt from the Law
of the Fifty and Five,
Even to Ninety and Nine"—these were the
terms of the pact:
Thus did the little Tin Gods (long may Their
Highnesses thrive!)
Silence his mouth with rupees, keeping their
Circle intact;

Appointing a Colonel from Chatham who
managed the Bhamo State Line.
(The which was one mile and one furlong—a
guaranteed twenty-inch gauge).
So Exeter Battleby Tring consented his claims
to resign,
And died, on four thousand a month, in the
ninetieth year of his age.

DELILAH

We have another Viceroy now, those days are dead
and done,
Of Delilah Aberyswith and depraved Ulysses Gunne.

Delilah Aberyswith was a lady—not too
young—
With a perfect taste in dresses, and a badly-
bitted tongue,
With a thirst for information, and a greater
thirst for praise,
And a little house in Simla, in the Prehistoric
Days.

By reason of her marriage to a gentleman in
power,
Delilah was acquainted with the gossip of the
hour;
And many little secrets, of a half-official kind,
Were whispered to Delilah, and she bore them
all in mind.

She patronized extensively a man, Ulysses
Gunne,
Whose mode of earning money was a low and
shameful one.

He wrote for divers papers, which, as everybody knows,
Is worse than serving in a shop or scaring off the crows.

He praised her "queenly beauty" first; and, later on, he hinted
At the "vastness of her intellect" with compliment unstinted.
He went with her a-riding, and his love for her was such
That he loaned her all his horses, and—she galled them very much.

One day, THEY brewed a secret of a fine financial sort;
It related to Appointments, to a Man and a Report.
'Twas almost worth the keeping (only seven people knew it),
And Gunne rose up to seek the truth and patiently ensue it.

It was a Viceroy's Secret, but—perhaps the wine was red—
Perhaps an Aged Councillor had lost his aged head—

Perhaps Delilah's eyes were bright—Delilah's whispers sweet—
The Aged Member told her what 'twere treason to repeat.

Ulysses went a-riding, and they talked of love and flowers;
Ulysses went a-calling, and he called for several hours;
Ulysses went a-waltzing, and Delilah helped him dance—
Ulysses let the waltzes go, and waited for his chance.

The summer sun was setting, and the summer air was still,
The couple went a-walking in the shade of Summer Hill,
The wasteful sunset faded out in turkis-green and gold,
Ulysses pleaded softly, and . . . that bad Delilah told!

Next morn, a startled Empire learned the all-important news;
Next week, the Aged Councillor was shaking in his shoes;

Next month, I met Delilah, and she did not show the least
Hesitation in affirming that Ulysses was a "beast."

* * * * * *

We have another Viceroy now, those days are dead and done,
Of Delilah Aberyswith and most mean Ulysses Gunne!

WHAT HAPPENED

Hurree Chunder Mookerjee, pride of
Bow Bazar,
Owner of a native press, "Barrishter-at-Lar,"
Waited on the Government with a claim to
wear
Sabres by the bucketful, rifles by the pair.

Then the Indian Government winked a wicked
wink,
Said to Chunder Mookerjee: "Stick to pen
and ink,
They are safer implements; but, if you insist,
We will let you carry arms whereso'er you
list."

Hurree Chunder Mookerjee sought the gun-
smith and
Bought the tuber of Lancaster, ballard, Dean
and Bland,
Bought a shiny bowie-knife, bought a town-
made sword,
Jingled like a carriage-horse when he went
abroad.

But the Indian Government, always keen to please,
Also gave permission to horrid men like these—
Yar Mahommed Yusufzai, down to kill or steal,
Chimbu Singh from Bikaneer, Tantia the Bhil.

Killar Khan, the Marri chief, Jowar Singh the Sikh,
Nubbee Baksh Punjabi Jat, Abdul Huq Rafiq—
He was a Wahabi; last, little Boh Hla-oo —
Took advantage of the act—took a Snider too.

They were unenlightened men, Ballard knew them not,
They procured their swords and guns chiefly on the spot,
And the lore of centuries, plus a hundred fights,
Made them slow to disregard one another's rights.

With a unanimity dear to patriotic hearts
All those hairy gentlemen out of foreign parts

Said: "The good old days are back—let us go
to war!"
Swaggered down the Grand Trunk Road, into
Bow Bazar.

Nubbee Baksh Punjabi Jat found a hide-
bound flail,
Chimbu Singh from Bikaneer oiled his Tonk
jezail,
Yar Mahommed Yusufzai spat and grinned
with glee
As he ground the butcher-knife of the Khy-
beree.

Jowar Singh the Sikh procured sabre, quoit,
and mace,
Abdul Huq, Wahabi, took the dagger from
its place,
While amid the jungle-grass danced and
grinned and jabbered
Little Boh Hla-oo and cleared the dah-blade
from the scabbard.

What became of Mookerjee? Soothly, who
can say?
Yar Mahommed only grins in a nasty way,

Jowar Singh is reticent, Chimbu Singh is mute,
But the belts of them all simply bulge with loot.

What became of Ballard's guns? Afghans black and grubby
Sell them for their silver weight to the men of Pubbi;
And the shiny bowie-knife and the town-made sword are
Hanging in a Marri camp just across the Border.

What became of Mookerjee? Ask Mahommed Yar
Prodding Siva's sacred bull down the Bow Bazar.
Speak to placid Nubbee Baksh—question land and sea—
Ask the Indian Congress men—only don't ask me!

PINK DOMINOES

"They are fools who kiss and tell"
Wisely has the poet sung.
Man may hold all sorts of posts
If he'll only hold his tongue.

JENNY and Me were engaged, you see,
On the eve of the Fancy Ball;
So a kiss or two was nothing to you
Or any one else at all.

Jenny would go in a domino—
Pretty and pink, but warm;
While I attended, clad in a splendid
Austrian uniform.

Now we had arranged, through notes exchanged
Early that afternoon,
At Number Four to waltz no more,
But to sit in the dusk and spoon.

(I wish you to see that Jenny and Me
Had barely exchanged our troth;
So a kiss or two was strictly due
By, from, and between us both.)

When Three was over, an eager lover,
I fled to the gloom outside;
And a Domino came out also
Whom I took for my future bride.

That is to say, in a casual way,
I slipped my arm around her;
With a kiss or two (which is nothing to you),
And ready to kiss I found her.

She turned her head, and the name she said
Was certainly not my own;
But ere I could speak, with a smothered shriek
She fled and left me alone.

Then Jenny came, and I saw with shame
She'd doffed her domino;
And I had embraced an alien waist—
But I did not tell her so.

Next morn I knew that there were two
Dominoes pink, and one
Had cloaked the spouse of Sir Julian Vouse,
Our big political gun.

Sir J. was old, and her hair was gold,
And her eye was a blue cerulean;
And the name she said when she turned her head
Was not in the least like "Julian."

Now wasn't it nice, when want of *pice*
Forbade us twain to marry,
That old Sir J., in the kindest way,
Made me his Secre*tarry?*

THE MAN WHO COULD WRITE

Shun—shun the Bowl! That fatal, facile drink
  Has ruined many geese who dipped their quills in't,
Bribe, murder, marry, but steer clear of Ink
  Save when you write receipts for paid-up bills in't.
There may be silver in the "blue-back"—all
I know of is the iron and the gall.

Boanerges Blitzen, servant of the Queen,
Is a dismal failure—is a Might-have-been.
In a luckless moment he discovered men
Rise to high position through a ready pen.

Boanerges Blitzen argued, therefore: "I
With the selfsame weapon can attain as high."
Only he did not possess, when he made the trial,
Wicked wit of C-lv-n, irony of L——l.

(Men who spar with Government need, to back their blows,
Something more than ordinary journalistic prose.)

Never young Civilian's prospects were so bright,
Till an Indian paper found that he could write:
Never young Civilian's prospects were so dark,
When the wretched Blitzen wrote to make his mark.

Certainly he scored it, bold and black and firm,
In that Indian paper—made his seniors squirm,
Quoted office scandals, wrote the tactless truth—
Was there ever known a more misguided youth?

When the Rag he wrote for praised his plucky game,
Boanerges Blitzen felt that this was Fame:
When the men he wrote of shook their heads and swore,
Boanerges Blitzen only wrote the more.

Posed as Young Ithuriel, resolute and grim,
Till he found promotion didn't come to him;
Till he found that reprimands weekly were his lot,
And his many Districts curiously hot.

Till he found his furlough strangely hard to win,
Boanerges Blitzen didn't care a pin:
Then it seemed to dawn on him something wasn't right—
Boanerges Blitzen put it down to "spite."

Languished in a District desolate and dry;
Watched the Local Government yearly pass him by;
Wondered where the hitch was; called it most unfair.

* * * * * *

That was seven years ago—and he still is there.

MUNICIPAL

"Why is my District death-rate low?"
Said Binks of Hezabad.
"Wells, drains, and sewage-outfalls are
My own peculiar fad.
I learned a lesson once." It ran
"Thus," quoth that most veracious man:

It was an August evening, and, in snowy garments clad,
I paid a round of visits in the lines of Hezabad;
When, presently, my Waler saw, and did not like at all,
A Commissariat elephant careering down the Mall.

I couldn't see the driver, and across my mind it rushed
That the Commissariat elephant had suddenly gone *musth*.
I didn't care to meet him, and I couldn't well get down,
So I let the Waler have it, and we headed for the town.

The buggy was a new one, and, praise Dykes, it stood the strain,
Till the Waler jumped a bullock just above the City Drain;
And the next that I remember was a hurricane of squeals,
And the creature making toothpicks of my five-foot patent wheels.

He seemed to want the owner, so I fled, distraught with fear,
To the Main Drain sewage-outfall while he snorted in my ear—
Reached the four-foot drain-head safely, and, in darkness and despair,
Felt the brute's proboscis fingering my terror-stiffened hair.

Heard it trumpet on my shoulder—tried to crawl a little higher—
Found the Main Drain sewage-outfall blocked, some eight feet up, with mire;
And, for twenty reeking minutes, Sir, my very marrow froze,
While the trunk was feeling blindly for a purchase on my toes!

It missed me by a fraction, but my hair was
turning grey
Before they called the drivers up and dragged
the brute away.
Then I sought the City Elders, and my words
were very plain.
They flushed that four-foot drain-head, and—
it never choked again.

You may hold with surface-drainage, and the
sun-for-garbage cure,
Till you've been a periwinkle shrinking coyly
up a sewer.
I believe in well-flushed culverts . . .
This is why the death-rate's small;
And, if you don't believe me, get *shikarred*
yourself. That's all.

A CODE OF MORALS

Lest you should think this story true,
I merely mention I
Evolved it lately. 'Tis a most
Unmitigated misstatement.

Now Jones had left his new-wed bride to keep
his house in order,
And hied away to the Hurrum Hills above the
Afghan border,
To sit on a rock with a heliograph; but ere he
left he taught
His wife the working of the Code that sets the
miles at naught.

And Love had made him very sage, as Nature
made her fair;
So Cupid and Apollo linked, *per* heliograph,
the pair.
At dawn, across the Hurrum Hills, he flashed
her counsel wise—
At e'en, the dying sunset bore her husband's
homilies.

He warned her 'gainst seductive youths in scarlet clad and gold,
As much as 'gainst the blandishments paternal of the old;
But kept his gravest warnings for (hereby the ditty hangs)
That snowy-haired Lothario, Lieutenant-General Bangs.

'Twas General Bangs, with Aide and Staff, that tittupped on the way,
When they beheld a heliograph tempestuously at play;
They thought of Border risings, and of stations sacked and burned—
So stopped to take the message down—and this is what they learned:

"Dash, dot dot, dot, dot dash, dot dash dot" twice. The General swore.
"Was ever General Officer addressed as 'dear' before?
" 'My Love,' i' faith! 'My Duck,' Gadzooks! 'My darling popsy-wop!'
Spirit of great Lord Wolseley, *who* is on that mountain top?"

The artless Aide-de-camp was mute; the gilded Staff were still,
As, dumb with pent-up mirth, they booked that message from the hill;
For, clear as summer's lightning flare, the husband's warning ran:
"Don't dance or ride with General Bangs—a most immoral man."

(At dawn, across the Hurrum Hills, he flashed her counsel wise—
But, howsoever Love be blind, the world at large hath eyes.)
With damnatory dot and dash he heliographed his wife
Some interesting details of the General's private life.

The artless Aide-de-camp was mute; the shining Staff were still,
And red and ever redder grew the General's shaven gill.
And this is what he said at last (his feelings matter not):
"I think we've tapped a private line. Hi! Threes about there! Trot!"

All honor unto Bangs, for ne'er did Jones
thereafter know
By word or act official who read off that
helio.;
But the tale is on the Frontier, and from
Michni to Mool*tan*
They know the worthy General as "that most
immoral man."

THE LAST DEPARTMENT

Twelve hundred million men are spread
About this Earth and I and You
Wonder, when You and I are dead,
What will those luckless millions do?

"None whole or clean," we cry, "or free from stain
Of favor." Wait awhile, till we attain
The Last Department, where nor fraud nor fools,
Nor grade nor greed, shall trouble us again.

Fear, Favor, or Affection—what are these
To the grim Head who claims our services?
I never knew a wife or interest yet
Delay that *pukka* step, miscalled "decease";

When leave, long overdue, none can deny;
When idleness of all Eternity
Becomes our furlough, and the marigold
Our thriftless, bullion-minting Treasury.

Transferred to the Eternal Settlement,
Each in his strait, wood-scantled office pent,
No longer Brown reverses Smith's appeals,
Or Jones records his Minute of Dissent.

And One, long since a pillar of the Court,
As mud between the beams thereof is wrought;
And One who wrote on phosphates for the crops
Is subject-matter of his own Report.

(These be the glorious ends whereto we pass—
Let Him who Is, go call on Him who Was;
And He shall see the *mallie* steals the slab
For currie-grinder, and for goats the grass.)

A breath of wind, a Border bullet's flight
A draught of water, or a horse's fright—
The droning of the fat *Sheristadar*
Ceases, the punkah stops, and falls the night

For you or Me. Do those who live decline
The step that offers, or their work resign?
Trust me, To-day's Most Indispensables,
Five hundred men can take your place or mine.

OTHER VERSES

RECESSIONAL

(A VICTORIAN ODE)

GOD of our fathers, known of old—
  Lord of our far-flung battle line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
  Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies—
  The Captains and the Kings depart—
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
  An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away—
  On dune and headland sinks the fire—
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
  Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
  Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—
Such boastings as the Gentiles use,
  Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
  In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
  And, guarding, calls not Thee to guard.
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!

Amen.

THE VAMPIRE

The verses—as suggested by the painting by Philip Burne-Jones, first exhibited at the new gallery in London in 1897.

A FOOL there was and he made his prayer
(Even as you and I!)
To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair
(We called her the woman who did not care),
But the fool he called her his lady fair
(Even as you and I!)

Oh the years we waste and the tears we waste
And the work of our head and hand,
Belong to the woman who did not know
(And now we know that she never could know)
And did not understand.

A fool there was and his goods he spent
(Even as you and I!)
Honor and faith and a sure intent
(And it wasn't the least what the lady meant),
But a fool must follow his natural bent
(Even as you and I!)

Oh the toil we lost and the spoil we lost
And the excellent things we planned,
Belong to the woman who didn't know why
(And now we know she never knew why)
And did not understand.

The fool was stripped to his foolish hide
(Even as you and I!)
Which she might have seen when she threw
him aside—
(But it isn't on record the lady tried)
So some of him lived but the most of him
died—
(Even as you and I!)

And it isn't the shame and it isn't th' blame
That stings like a white hot brand.
It's coming to know that she never knew why
(Seeing at last she could never know why)
And never could understand.

TO THE UNKNOWN GODDESS

WILL you conquer my heart with your beauty; my soul going out from afar?
Shall I fall to your hand as a victim of crafty and cautious *shikar?*

Have I met you and passed you already, unknowing, unthinking, and blind?
Shall I meet you next session at Simla, O sweetest and best of your kind?

Does the P. and O. bear you to me-ward, or, clad in short frocks in the West,
Are you growing the charms that shall capture and torture the heart in my breast?

Will you stay in the Plains till September—my passion as warm as the day?
Will you bring me to book on the Mountains, or where the thermantidotes play?

When the light of your eyes shall make pallid the mean lesser lights I pursue,
And the charm of your presence shall lure me from love of the gay "thirteen-two";

When the peg and the pig-skin shall please not; when I buy me Calcutta-built clothes;
When I quit the Delight of Wild Asses; forswearing the swearing of oaths;

As a deer to the hand of the hunter when I turn 'mid the gibes of my friends;
When the days of my freedom are numbered, and the life of the bachelor ends.

Ah Goddess! child, spinster, or widow—as of old on Mars Hill when they raised
To the God that they knew not an altar—so I, a young Pagan, have praised

The Goddess I know not nor worship; yet, if half that men tell me be true,
You will come in the future, and therefore these verses are written to you.

THE RUPAIYAT OF OMAR KAL'VIN

(Allowing for the difference 'twixt prose and rhymed exaggeration, this ought to reproduce the sense of what Sir A—— told the nation some time ago, when the Government struck from our incomes two per cent.)

Now the New Year, reviving last Year's Debt,
The Thoughtful Fisher casteth wide his Net;
  So I with begging Dish and ready Tongue
Assail all Men for all that I can get.

Imports indeed are gone with all their Dues—
Lo! Salt a Lever that I dare not use,
  Nor may I ask the Tillers in Bengal—
Surely my Kith and Kin will not refuse!

Pay—and I promise by the Dust of Spring,
Retrenchment. If my promises can bring
  Comfort, Ye have Them now a thousand-
    fold—
By Allah! I will promise *Anything!*

Indeed, indeed, Retrenchment oft before
I swore—but did I mean it when I swore?
And then, and then, We wandered to the Hills
And so the Little Less became Much More.

Whether at Boileaugunge or Babylon,
I know not how the wretched Thing is done,
  The Items of Receipt grow surely small;
The Items of Expense mount one by one.

I cannot help it. What have I to do
With One and Five, or Four, or Three, or Two?
  Let Scribes spit Blood and Sulphur as they please,
Or Statemen call me foolish—Heed not you.

Behold, I promise—Anything You will.
Behold, I greet you with an empty Till—
  Ah! Fellow-Sinners, of your Charity
Seek not the Reason of the Dearth, but fill.

For if I sinned and fell, where lies the Gain
Of Knowledge? Would it ease you of your Pain
  To know the tangled Threads of Revenue,
I ravel deeper in a hopeless Skein?

"Who hath not Prudence"—what was it I said,
Of Her who paints her Eyes and tires Her Head,

And gibes and mocks the People in the Street,
And fawns upon them for Her thriftless Bread?

Accursed is She of Eve's daughters—She
Hath cast off Prudence, and Her End shall be
Destruction . . . Brethren, of your Bounty grant
Some portion of your daily Bread to *Me*.

LA NUIT BLANCHE

A much-discerning Public hold
The Singer generally sings
Of personal and private things,
And prints and sells his past for gold.

Whatever I may here disclaim,
The very clever folk I sing to
Will most indubitably cling to
Their pet delusion, just the same.

I HAD seen, as dawn was breaking
And I staggered to my rest,
Tari Devi softly shaking
From the Cart Road to the crest.
I had seen the spurs of Jakko
Heave and quiver, swell and sink.
Was it Earthquake or tobacco,
Day of Doom or Night of Drink?

In the full, fresh, fragrant morning
I observed a camel crawl,
Laws of gravitation scorning,
On the ceiling and the wall;
Then I watched a fender walking,
And I heard grey leeches sing,
And a red-hot monkey talking
Did not seem the proper thing.

Then a Creature, skinned and crimson,
Ran about the floor and cried,
And they said I had the "jims" on,
And they dosed me with bromide,
And they locked me in my bedroom—
Me and one wee Blood Red Mouse —
Though I said: "To give my head room
"You had best unroof the house."

But my words were all unheeded,
Though I told the grave M. D.
That the treatment really needed
Was a dip in open sea
That was lapping just below me,
Smooth as silver, white as snow,
And it took three men to throw me
When I found I could not go.

Half the night I watched the Heavens
Fizz like '81 champagne—
Fly to sixes and to sevens,
Wheel and thunder back again;
And when all was peace and order
Save one planet nailed askew,
Much I wept because my warder
Would not let me set it true.

After frenzied hours of waiting,
When the Earth and Skies were dumb,
Pealed an awful voice dictating
An interminable sum,
Changing to a tangled story—
"What she said you said I said"—
Till the Moon arose in glory,
And I found her . . . in my head;

Then a Face came, blind and weeping,
And It couldn't wipe It's eyes,
And It muttered I was keeping
Back the moonlight from the skies;
So I patted It for pity,
But It whistled shrill with wrath,
And a huge black Devil City
Poured its peoples on my path.

So I fled with steps uncertain
On a thousand-year long race,
But the bellying of the curtain
Kept me always in one place;
While the tumult rose and maddened
To the roar of Earth on fire,
Ere it ebbed and sank and saddened
To a whisper tense as wire.

In tolerable stillness
Rose one little, little star,
And it chuckled at my illness,
And it mocked me from afar;
And its brethren came and eyed me,
Called the Universe to aid,
Till I lay, with naught to hide me,
'Neath the Scorn of All Things Made.

Dun and saffron, robed and splendid,
Broke the solemn, pitying Day,
And I knew my pains were ended,
And I turned and tried to pray;
But my speech was shattered wholly,
And I wept as children weep,
Till the dawn-wind, softly, slowly,
Brought to burning eyelids sleep.

MY RIVAL

I go to concert, party, ball—
  What profit is in these?
I sit alone against the wall
  And strive to look at ease.
The incense that is mine by right
  They burn before Her shrine;
And that's because I'm seventeen
  And She is forty-nine.

I cannot check my girlish blush,
  My color comes and goes;
I redden to my finger-tips,
  And sometimes to my nose.
But She is white where white should be,
  And red where red should shine.
The blush that flies at seventeen
  Is fixed at forty-nine.

I wish *I* had Her constant cheek:
  I wish that I could sing
All sorts of funny little songs,
  Not quite the proper thing.

I'm very *gauche* and very shy,
Her jokes aren't in my line;
And, worst of all, I'm seventeen
While She is forty-nine.

The young men come, the young men go
Each pink and white and neat,
She's older than their mothers, but
They grovel at Her feet.
They walk beside Her *'rickshaw* wheels—
None ever walk by mine;
And that's because I'm seventeen
And She is forty-nine.

She rides with half a dozen men,
(She calls them "boys" and "mashers")
I trot along the Mall alone;
My prettiest frocks and sashes
Don't help to fill my programme-card,
And vainly I repine
From ten to two A. M. Ah me!
Would I were forty-nine!

She calls me "darling," "pet," and "dear,"
And "sweet retiring maid."
I'm always at the back, I know,
She puts me in the shade.

She introduces me to men,
"Cast" lovers, I opine,
For sixty takes to seventeen,
Nineteen to forty-nine.

But even She must older grow
And end Her dancing days,
She can't go on forever so
At concerts, balls, and plays.
One ray of priceless hope I see
Before my footsteps shine;
Just think, that She'll be eighty-one
When I am forty-nine.

THE LOVERS' LITANY

Eyes of grey—a sodden quay,
Driving rain and falling tears,
As the steamer wears to sea
In a parting storm of cheers.
Sing, for Faith and Hope are high—
None so true as you and I—
Sing the Lovers' Litany:
"Love like ours can never die!"

Eyes of black—a throbbing keel,
Milky foam to left and right;
Whispered converse near the wheel
In the brilliant tropic night.
Cross that rules the Southern Sky!
Stars that sweep and wheel and fly,
Hear the Lovers' Litany:
"Love like ours can never die!"

Eyes of brown—a dusty plain
Split and parched with heat of June,
Flying hoof and tightened rein,
Hearts that beat the old, old tune.

Side by side the horses fly,
Frame we now the old reply
Of the Lovers' Litany:
"Love like ours can never die!"

Eyes of blue—the Simla Hills
Silvered with the moonlight hoar;
Pleading of the waltz that thrills,
Dies and echoes round Benmore.
"Mabel," "Officers," "Good-bye,"
Glamour, wine, and witchery—
On my soul's sincerity,
"Love like ours can never die!"

Maidens, of your charity,
Pity my most luckless state.
Four times Cupid's debtor I—
Bankrupt in quadruplicate.
Yet, despite this evil case,
And a maiden showèd me grace,
Four-and-forty times would I
Sing the Lovers' Litany:
"Love like ours can never die!"

A BALLAD OF BURIAL

(*"Saint Praxed's ever was the Church for peace"*)

If down here I chance to die,
Solemnly I beg you take
All that is left of "I"
To the Hills for old sake's sake.
Pack me very thoroughly
In the ice that used to slake
Pegs I drank when I was dry—
This observe for old sake's sake.

To the railway station hie,
There a single ticket take
For Umballa—goods-train—I
Shall not mind delay or shake.
I shall rest contentedly
Spite of clamor coolies make;
Thus in state and dignity
Send me up for old sake's sake.

Next the sleepy Babu wake,
Book a Kalka van "for four."
Few, I think, will care to make
Journeys with me any more

As they used to do of yore.
I shall need a "special" break—
Thing I never took before—
Get me one for old sake's sake.

After that—arrangements make.
No hotel will take me in,
And a bullock's back would break
'Neath the teak and leaden skin.
Tonga ropes are frail and thin,
Or, did I a back-seat take,
In a tonga I might spin,—
Do your best for old sake's sake.

After that—your work is done.
Recollect a Padre must
Mourn the dear departed one—
Throw the ashes and the dust.
Don't go down at once. I trust
You will find excuse to "snake
Three days' casual on the bust,"
Get your fun for old sake's sake.

I could never stand the Plains.
Think of blazing June and May
Think of those September rains
Yearly till the Judgment Day!
I should never rest in peace,
I should sweat and lie awake.
Rail me then, on my decease,
To the Hills for old sake's sake.

DIVIDED DESTINIES

It was an artless *Bandar,* and he danced upon
a pine,
And much I wondered how he lived, and
where the beast might dine,
And many, many other things, till, o'er my
morning smoke,
I slept the sleep of idleness and dreamt that
Bandar spoke.

He said: "O man of many clothes! Sad
crawler on the Hills!
Observe, I know not Ranken's shop, nor Ran-
ken's monthly bills;
I take no heed to trousers or the coats that
you call dress;
Nor am I plagued with little cards for little
drinks at Mess.

"I steal the bunnia's grain at morn, at noon
and eventide,
(For he is fat and I am spare), I roam the
mountain side,

I follow no man's carriage, and no, never in my life
Have I flirted at Peliti's with another *Bandar's* wife.

"O man of futile fopperies—unnecessary wraps;
I own no ponies in the hills, I drive no tall-wheeled traps;
I buy me not twelve-button gloves, 'short-sixes' eke, or rings,
Nor do I waste at Hamilton's my wealth on 'pretty things.'

"I quarrel with my wife at home, we never fight abroad;
But Mrs. B. has grasped the fact that I am her only lord.
I never heard of fever—dumps nor debts depress my soul;
And I pity and despise you!" Here he pouched my breakfast-roll.

His hide was very mangy, and his face was very red,
And ever and anon he scratched with energy his head.

His manners were not always nice, but how
my spirit cried
To be an artless *Bandar* loose upon the moun-
tain side!

So I answered: "Gentle *Bandar,* an inscrutable
Decree
Makes thee a gleesome fleasome Thou, and me
a wretched Me.
Go! Depart in peace, my brother, to thy home
amid the pine;
Yet forget not once a mortal wished to change
his lot with thine."

THE MASQUE OF PLENTY

ARGUMENT.—The Indian Government, being minded to discover the economic condition of their lands, sent a Committee to inquire into it; and saw that it was good.

SCENE.—*The wooded heights of Simla. The Incarnation of the Government of India in the raiment of the Angel of Plenty sings, to pianoforte accompaniment:*

"How sweet is the shepherd's sweet life!
From the dawn to the even he strays—
He shall follow his sheep all the day,
And his tongue shall be fillèd with praise.

(*Adagio dim.*) Fillèd with praise!"

(*Largendo con sp.*) Now this is the position.
Go make an inquisition
Into their real condition
As swiftly as ye may.

(*p.*) Ay, paint our swarthy billions
The richest of vermilions
Ere two well-led cotillions
Have danced themselves away.

TURKISH PATROL, *as able and intelligent Investigators wind down the Himalayas:*

What is the state of the Nation? What is its occupation?
Hi! get along, get along, get along—lend us the information!

(*Dim.*) Census the *byle* and the *yabu*—capture a first-class Babu,
Set him to cut Gazetteers—Gazetteers . . .
(*ff.*) What is the state of the Nation, etc., etc.

INTERLUDE, *from Nowhere in Particular, to stringed and Oriental instruments.*

Our cattle reel beneath the yoke they bear—
The earth is iron, and the skies are brass—
And faint with fervor of the flaming air
The languid hours pass.

The well is dry beneath the village tree—
The young wheat withers ere it reach a span.
And belts of blinding sand show cruelly
Where once the river ran.

Pray, brothers, pray, but to no earthly King—
Lift up your hands above the blighted grain,
Look westward—if they please, the Gods shall bring
Their mercy with the rain.

Look westward—bears the blue no brown cloudbank?
Nay, it is written—wherefore should we fly?
On our own field and by our cattle's flank
Lie down, lie down to die!

SEMI-CHORUS.

By the plumed heads of Kings
Waving high,
Where the tall corn springs
O'er the dead.

If they rust or rot we die,
If they ripen we are fed.
Very mighty is the power of our Kings!

Triumphal return to Simla of the Investigators, attired after the manner of Dionysus, leading a pet tiger-cub in wreaths of rhubarb leaves, symbolical of India under medical treatment. They sing:

We have seen, we have written—behold it, the
proof of our manifold toil!
In their hosts they assembled and told it—the
tale of the sons of the soil.
We have said of the Sickness, "Where is it?"
—and of Death, "It is far from our ken;"
We have paid a particular visit to the affluent
children of men.
We have trodden the mart and the well-curb—
we have trooped to the bield and the byre;
And the King may the forces of Hell curb, for
the People have all they desire!

Castanets and step-dance:

Oh, the *dom* and the *mag* and the *thakur* and
the *thag,*
And the *nat* and the *brinjaree*
And the *bunnia* and the *ryot* are as happy and
as quiet
And as plump as they can be!
Yes, the *jain* and the *jat* in his stucco-fronted
hut,
And the bounding *bazugar,*
By the favor of the King are as fat as any-
thing,
They are—they are—they are!

RECITATIVE, *Government of India, with white satin wings and electroplated harp:*

How beautiful upon the mountains—in peace reclining,
Thus to be assured that our people are unanimously dining.
And though there are places not so blessed as others in natural advantages, which, after all, was only to be expected,
Proud and glad are we to congratulate you upon the work you have thus ably effected.
(*Cres.*) How be-ewtiful upon the mountains!

HIRED BAND, *brasses only, full chorus:*

God bless the Squire
And all his rich relations
Who teach us poor people
We eat our proper rations—
We eat our proper rations,
In spite of inundations,
Malarial exhalations,
And casual starvations,
We have, we have, they say we have—
We *have* our proper rations!

(*Cornet.*)

Which nobody can deny!
If he does he tells a lie—

We are all as willing as Barkis—
We all of us loves the Markiss—
We all of us stuffs our ca-ar-kis—
With food until we die! (*Da capo.*).

CHORUS OF THE CRYSTALLIZED FACTS.

Before the beginning of years
There came to the rule of the State
Men with a pair of shears,
Men with an Estimate—
Strachey with Muir for leaven,
Lytton with locks that fell,
Ripon fooling with Heaven,
And Temple riding like H-ll!
And the bigots took in hand
Cess and the falling rain,
And the measure of sifted sand
The dealer puts in the grain—
Imports by land and sea,
To uttermost decimal worth,
And registration—free—
In the houses of death and of birth:
And fashioned with pens and paper,
And fashioned in black and white,
With Life for a flickering taper
And Death for a blazing light—

With the Armed and the Civil Power,
That his strength might endure for a span,
From Adam's Bridge to Peshawur,
The Much Administered man.

In the towns of the North and the East,
They gathered as unto rule,
They bade him starve the priest
And send his children to school.
Railways and roads they wrought,
For the needs of the soil within;
A time to squabble in court,
A time to bear and to grin.
And gave him peace in his ways,
Jails—and Police to fight,
Justice at length of days,
And Right—and Might in the Right.
His speech is of mortgaged bedding,
On his kine he borrows yet,
At his heart is his daughter's wedding,
In his eye foreknowledge of debt.
He eats and hath indigestion,
He toils and he may not stop;
His life is a long-drawn question
Between a crop and a crop.

THE MARE'S NEST

Jane Austen Beecher Stowe de Rouse
  Was good beyond all earthly need;
But, on the other hand, her spouse
  Was very, very bad indeed.
He smoked cigars, called churches slow,
And raced—but this she did not know.

For Belial Machiavelli kept
  The little fact a secret, and,
Though o'er his minor sins she wept,
  Jane Austen did not understand
That Lilly—thirteen-two and bay—
Absorbed one half her husband's pay.

She was so good, she made him worse;
  (Some women are like this, I think;)
He taught her parrot how to curse,
  Her Assam monkey how to drink.
He vexed her righteous soul until
She went up, and he went down hill.

Then came the crisis, strange to say,
Which turned a good wife to a better.
A telegraphic peon, one day,
Brought her—now, had it been a letter
For Belial Machiavelli, I
Know Jane would just have let it lie.

But 'twas a telegram instead,
Marked "urgent," and her duty plain
To open it. Jane Austen read:
"Your Lilly's got a cough again.
Can't understand why she is kept
At your expense." Jane Austen wept.

It was a misdirected wire.
Her husband was at Shaitanpore.
She spread her anger, hot as fire,
Through six thin foreign sheets or more,
Sent off that letter, wrote another
To her solicitor—and mother.

Then Belial Machiavelli saw
Her error and, I trust, his own,
Wired to the minion of the Law,
And traveled wifeward—not alone.
For Lilly—thirteen-two and bay—
Came in a horse-box all the way.

There was a scene—a weep or two—
With many kisses. Austen Jane
Rode Lilly all the season through,
And never opened wires again.
She races now with Belial. This
Is very sad, but so it is.

POSSIBILITIES

Ay, lay him 'neath the Simla pine—
  A fortnight fully to be missed,
  Behold, we lose our fourth at whist,
A chair is vacant where we dine.

His place forgets him; other men
  Have bought his ponies, guns, and traps.
  His fortune is the Great Perhaps
And that cool rest-house down the glen,

Whence he shall hear, as spirits may,
  Our mundane revel on the height,
  Shall watch each flashing *'rickshaw*-light
Sweep on to dinner, dance, and play.

Benmore shall woo him to the ball
  With lighted rooms and braying band,
  And he shall hear and understand
"Dream Faces" better than us all.

For, think you, as the vapors flee
  Across Sanjaolie after rain,
  His soul may climb the hill again
To each old field of victory.

Unseen, who women held so dear,
The strong man's yearning to his kind
Shall shake at most the window-blind,
Or dull awhile the card-room's cheer.

In his own place of power unknown,
His Light o' Love another's flame,
His dearest pony galloped lame,
And he an alien and alone.

Yet may he meet with many a friend—
Shrewd shadows, lingering long unseen
Among us when *"God save the Queen"*
Shows even "extras" have an end.

And, when we leave the heated room,
And, when at four the lights expire,
The crew shall gather round the fire
And mock our laughter in the gloom.

Talk as we talked, and they ere death—
First wanly, dance in ghostly wise,
With ghosts of tunes for melodies,
And vanish at the morning's breath.

CHRISTMAS IN INDIA

Dim dawn behind the tamarisks—the sky is saffron-yellow—
As the women in the village grind the corn,
And the parrots seek the riverside, each calling to his fellow
That the Day, the staring Eastern Day is born.
Oh the white dust on the highway! Oh the stenches in the byway!
Oh the clammy fog that hovers over earth!
And at Home they're making merry 'neath the white and scarlet berry—
What part have India's exiles in their mirth?

Full day behind the tamarisks—the sky is blue and staring—
As the cattle crawl afield beneath the yoke,
And they bear One o'er the field-path, who is past all hope or caring,
To the ghât below the curling wreaths of smoke.
Call on Rama, going slowly, as ye bear a brother lowly—

Call on Rama—he may hear, perhaps,
your voice!
With our hymn-books, and our psalters
we appeal to other altars,
And to-day we bid "good Christian
men rejoice!"

High noon behind the tamarisks—the sun is
hot above us—
As at Home the Christmas Day is breaking
wan.
They will drink our healths at dinner—those
who tell us how they love us,
And forget us till another year be gone!
Oh the toil that knows no breaking! Oh
the *Heimweh,* ceaseless, aching!
Oh the black dividing Sea and alien
Plain!
Youth was cheap—wherefore we sold it.
Gold was good—we hoped to hold it,
And to-day we know the fulness of our
gain.

Grey dusk behind the tamarisks—the parrots
fly together—
As the sun is sinking slowly over Home;
And his last ray seems to mock us shackled in
a lifelong tether
That drags us back howe-er so far we roam.

Hard her service, poor her payment—she
in ancient, tattered raiment—
India, she the grim Stepmother of our
kind.
If a year of life be lent her, if her temple's
shrine we enter,
The door is shut—we may not look be-
hind.

Black night behind the tamarisks—the owls
begin their chorus—
As the conches from the temple scream and
bray.
With the fruitless years behind us, and the
hopeless years before us,
Let us honor, O my brothers, Christmas
Day!
Call a truce, then, to our labors—let us
feast with friends and neighbors,
And be merry as the custom of our
caste;
For if "faint and forced the laughter,"
and if sadness follow after,
We are richer by one mocking Christ-
mas past.

PAGETT, M.P.

> The toad beneath the harrow knows
> Exactly where each tooth-point goes.
> The butterfly upon the road
> Preaches contentment to that toad.

PAGETT, M.P., was a liar, and a fluent liar therewith,—
He spoke of the heat of India as the "Asian Solar Myth;"
Came on a four months' visit, to "study the East," in November,
And I got him to sign an agreement vowing to stay till September.

March came in with the *köil*. Pagett was cool and gay,
Called me a "bloated Brahmin," talked of my "princely pay."
March went out with the roses. "Where is your heat?" said he.
"Coming," said I to Pagett. "Skittles!" said Pagett, M.P.

April began with the punkah, coolies, and prickly-heat,—
Pagett was dear to mosquitoes, sandflies found him a treat.

He grew speckled and lumpy—hammered, I grieve to say,
Aryan brothers who fanned him, in an illiberal way.

May set in with a dust-storm,—Pagett went down with the sun.
All the delights of the season tickled him one by one.
Imprimis—ten days' "liver"—due to his drinking beer;
Later, a dose of fever—slight, but he called it severe.

Dysent'ry touched him in June, after the *Chota Bursat*—
Lowered his portly person—made him yearn to depart.
He didn't call me a "Brahmin," or "bloated," or "overpaid,"
But seemed to think it a wonder that any one stayed.

July was a trifle unhealthy,—Pagett was ill with fear,
'Called it the "Cholera Morbus," hinted that life was dear.

He babbled of "Eastern exile," and mentioned
his home with tears;
But I hadn't seen *my* children for close upon
seven years.

We reached a hundred and twenty once in the
Court at noon,
(I've mentioned Pagett was portly) Pagett
went off in a swoon.
That was an end to the business; Pagett, the
perjured, fled
With a practical, working knowledge of "Solar
Myths" in his head.

And I laughed as I drove from the station, but
the mirth died out on my lips
As I thought of the fools like Pagett who write
of their "Eastern trips,"
And the sneers of the traveled idiots who duly
misgovern the land,
And I prayed to the Lord to deliver another
one into my hand.

THE SONG OF THE WOMEN

(*Lady Dufferin's Fund for medical aid to the Women of India*)

How shall she know the worship we would do her?
The walls are high, and she is very far.
How shall the women's message reach unto her
Above the tumult of the packed bazaar?
Free wind of March, against the lattice blowing,
Bear thou our thanks, lest she depart unknowing.

Go forth across the fields we may not roam in,
Go forth beyond the trees that rim the city,
To whatsoe'er fair place she hath her home in,
Who dowered us with wealth of love and pity.
Out of our shadow pass, and seek her singing—
"I have no gifts but Love alone for bringing."

Say that we be a feeble folk who greet her,
  But old in grief, and very wise in tears;
Say that we, being desolate, entreat her
  That she forget us not in after years;
    For we have seen the light, and it were grevious
    To dim that dawning if our lady leave us.

By life that ebbed with none to stanch the failing
  By Love's sad harvest garnered in the spring,
When Love in ignorance wept unavailing
  O'er young buds dead before their blossoming;
    By all the grey owl watched, the pale moon viewed,
    In past grim years, declare our gratitude!

By hands uplifted to the Gods that heard not,
  By gifts that found no favor in their sight,
By faces bent above the babe that stirred not,
  By nameless horrors of the stifling night;
    By ills foredone, by peace her toils discover,
    Bid Earth be good beneath and Heaven above her!

If she have sent her servants in our pain,
If she have fought with Death and dulled his sword;
If she have given back our sick again,
And to the breast the weakling lips restored,
Is it a little thing that she has wrought?
Then Life and Death and Motherhood be nought.

Go forth, O wind, our message on thy wings,
And they shall hear thee pass and bid thee speed,
In reed-roofed hut, or white-walled home of kings,
Who have been helpen by her in their need.
All spring shall give thee fragrance, and the wheat
Shall be a tasselled floorcloth to thy feet.

Haste, for our hearts are with thee, take no rest!
Loud-voiced ambassador, from sea to sea
Proclaim the blessing, manifold, confessed,
Of those in darkness by her hand set free,
Then very softly to her presence move,
And whisper: "Lady, lo, they know and love!"

A BALLADE OF JAKKO HILL

ONE moment bid the horses wait,
Since tiffin is not laid till three,
Below the upward path and straight
You climbed a year ago with me.
Love came upon us suddenly
And loosed—an idle hour to kill—
A headless, armless armory
That smote us both on Jakko Hill.

Ah Heaven! we would wait and wait
Through Time and to Eternity!
Ah Heaven! we could conquer Fate
With more than Godlike constancy!
I cut the date upon a tree—
Here stand the clumsy figures still:
"10-7-85, A.D."
Damp with the mist on Jakko Hill.

What came of high resolve and great,
And until Death fidelity!
Whose horse is waiting at your gate?
Whose *'rickshaw*-wheels ride over me?

No Saint's, I swear; and—let me see
To-night what names your programme fill—
We drift asunder merrily,
As drifts the mist on Jakko Hill!

L'ENVOI.

Princess, behold our ancient state
Has clean departed; and we see
'Twas Idleness we took for Fate
That bound light bonds on you and me.
Amen! Here ends the comedy
Where it began in all good will;
Since Love and Leave together flee
As driven mist on Jakko Hill.

THE PLEA OF THE SIMLA DANCERS

Too late, alas! the song
To remedy the wrong;—
The rooms are taken from us, swept and garnished for their fate.
But these tear-besprinkled pages
Shall attest to future ages
That we cried against the crime of it—too late, alas! too late!

"WHAT have *we* ever done to bear this grudge?"
Was there no room save only in Benmore
For docket, *duftar,* and for office drudge,
That you usurp our smoothest dancing floor?
Must babus do their work on polished teak?
Are ball-rooms fittest for the ink you spill?
Was there no other cheaper house to seek?
You might have left them all at Strawberry Hill.

We never harmed you! Innocent our guise,
Dainty our shining feet, our voices low;
And we revolved to divers melodies,
And we were happy but a year ago.

To-night, the moon that watched our light-
some wiles—
That beamed upon us through the deodars—
Is wan with gazing on official files,
And desecrating desks disgust the stars.

Nay! by the memory of tuneful nights—
Nay! by the witchery of flying feet—
Nay! by the glamour of foredone delights—
By all things merry, musical, and meet—
By wine that sparkled, and by sparkling eyes—
By wailing waltz—by reckless gallop's
strain—
By dim verandas and by soft replies,
Give us our ravished ball-room back again!

Or—hearken to the curse we lay on you!
The ghosts of waltzes shall perplex your
brain,
And murmurs of past merriment pursue
Your 'wildered clerks that they indite in
vain;
And when you count your poor Provincial
millions,
The only figures that your pen shall frame
Shall be the figures of dear, dear cotillions
Danced out in tumult long before you came.

Yea! *"See Saw"* shall upset your estimates,
"Dream Faces" shall your heavy heads be-
muse,
Because your hand, unheeding, desecrates
Our temple; fit for higher, worthier use.
And all the long verandas, eloquent
With echoes of a score of Simla years,
Shall plague you with unbidden sentiment—
Babbling of kisses, laughter, love, and tears.

So shall you mazed amid old memories stand,
So shall you toil, and shall accomplish
nought,
And ever in your ears a phantom Band
Shall blare away the staid official thought.
Wherefore—and ere this awful curse be
spoken,
Cast out your swarthy sacrilegious train,
And give—ere dancing cease and hearts be
broken—
Give us our ravished ball-room back again!

BALLAD OF FISHER'S BOARDING-HOUSE

That night, when through the mooring-chains
The wide-eyed corpse rolled free,
To blunder down by Garden Reach
And rot at Kedgeree,
The tale the Hughli told the shoal
The lean shoal told to me.

'Twas Fultah Fisher's boarding-house
Where sailor-men reside,
And there were men of all the ports
From Mississip to Clyde,
And regally they spat and smoked,
And fearsomely they lied.

They lied about the purple Sea
That gave them scanty bread,
They lied about the Earth beneath,
The Heavens overhead,
For they had looked too often on
Black rum when that was red.

They told their tales of wreck and wrong,
Of shame and lust and fraud,
They backed their toughest statements with
The Brimstone of the Lord,
And crackling oaths went to and fro
Across the fist-banged board.

And there was Hans the blue-eyed Dane,
Bull-throated, bare of arm,
Who carried on his hairy chest
The maid Ultruda's charm—
The little silver crucifix
That keeps a man from harm.

And there was Jake Without-the-Ears,
And Pamba the Malay,
And Carboy Gin the Guinea cook,
And Luz from Vigo Bay,
And Honest Jack who sold them slops
And harvested their pay.

And there was Salem Hardieker,
A lean Bostonian he—
Russ, German, English, Halfbreed, Finn,
Yank, Dane, and Portugee,
At Fultah Fisher's boarding-house
They rested from the sea.

Now Anne of Austria shared their drinks,
Collinga knew her fame,
From Tarnau in Galicia
To Jaun Bazar she came,
To eat the bread of infamy
And take the wage of shame.

She held a dozen men to heel—
  Rich spoil of war was hers,
In hose and gown and ring and chain,
  From twenty mariners,
And, by Port Law, that week, men called
  Her Salem Hardieker's.

But seamen learned—what landsmen know—
  That neither gifts nor gain
Can hold a winking Light o' Love
  Or Fancy's flight restrain,
When Anne of Austria rolled her eyes
  On Hans the blue-eyed Dane.

Since Life is strife, and strife means knife,
  From Howrah to the Bay,
And he may die before the dawn
  Who liquored out the day,
In Fultah Fisher's boarding-house
  We woo while yet we may.

But cold was Hans the blue-eyed Dane,
  Bull-throated, bare of arm,
And laughter shook the chest beneath
  The maid Ultruda's charm—
The little silver crucifix
  That keeps a man from harm.

"You speak to Salem Hardieker,
You was his girl, I know.
I ship mineselfs to-morrow, see,
Und round the Skaw we go,
South, down the Cattegat, by Hjelm,
To Besser in Saro."

When love rejected turns to hate,
All ill betide the man.
"You speak to Salem Hardieker"—
She spoke as woman can.
A scream—a sob—"He called me—names!"
And then the fray began.

An oath from Salem Hardieker,
A shriek upon the stairs,
A dance of shadows on the wall,
A knife-thrust unawares—
And Hans came down, as cattle drop,
Across the broken chairs.

* * * * * *

In Anne of Austria's trembling hands
The weary head fell low:
"I ship mineselfs to-morrow, straight
For Besser in Saro:
Und there Ultruda comes to me
At Easter, und I go

"South, down the Cattegat— What's here?
There—are—no—lights—to—guide!"
The mutter ceased, the spirit passed,
And Anne of Austria cried
In Fultah Fisher's boarding-house
When Hans the mighty died.

Thus slew they Hans the blue-eyed Dane,
Bull-throated, bare of arm,
But Anne of Austria looted first
The maid Ultruda's charm—
The little silver crucifix
That keeps a man from harm.

"AS THE BELL CLINKS"

As I left the Halls at Lumley, rose the vision
of a comely
Maid last season worshipped dumbly, watched
with fervor from afar;
And I wondered idly, blindly, if the maid
would greet me kindly.
That was all—the rest was settled by the clink-
ing tonga-bar.
Yea, my life and hers were coupled by the
tonga coupling-bar.

For my misty meditation, at the second chang-
ing-station,
Suffered sudden dislocation, fled before the
tuneless jar
Of a Wagner *obligato, scherzo,* double-hand
staccato,
Played on either pony's saddle by the clacking
tonga-bar—
Played with human speech, I fancied, by the
jigging, jolting bar.

"She was sweet," thought I, "last season, but
'twere surely wild unreason

Such tiny hope to freeze on as was offered by
my Star,
When she whispered, something sadly: 'I—
we feel your going badly!' "
"And you let the chance escape you?" rapped
the rattling tonga-bar.
"What a chance and what an idiot!" clicked
the vicious tonga-bar.

Heart of man—oh, heart of putty! Had I
gone by Kakahutti,
On the old Hill-road and rutty, I had 'scaped
that fatal car.
But his fortune each must bide by, so I watched
the milestones slide by,
To *"You call on Her to-morrow!"*—fugue
with cymbals by the bar—
"You must call on Her to-morrow!"—post-
horn gallop by the bar.

Yet a further stage my goal on—we were
whirling down to Solon,
With a double lurch and roll on, best foot fore-
most, *ganz und gar*—
"She was *very* sweet," I hinted. "If a kiss had
been imprinted?"—

"*'Would ha' saved a world of trouble!*" clashed the busy tonga-bar.
"*'Been accepted or rejected!*" banged and clanged the tonga-bar.

Then a notion wild and daring, 'spite the income tax's paring,
And a hasty thought of sharing—less than many incomes are,
Made me put a question private, you can guess what I would drive at.
"*You must work the sum to prove it,*" clanked the careless tonga-bar.
"*Simple Rule of Two will prove it,*" lilted back the tonga-bar.

It was under Khyraghaut I mused: "Suppose the maid be haughty—
(There are lovers rich—and forty)—wait some wealthy Avatar?
Answer, monitor untiring, 'twixt the ponies twain perspiring!"
"*Faint heart never won fair lady,*" creaked the straining tonga-bar.
"*Can I tell you ere you ask Her?*" pounded slow the tonga-bar.

Last, the Tara Devi turning showed the lights
of Simla burning,
Lit my little lazy yearning to a fiercer flame by
far.
As below the Mall we jingled, through my
very heart it tingled—
Did the iterated order of the threshing tonga-
bar—
"Try your luck—you can't do better!" twanged
the loosened tonga-bar.

AN OLD SONG

So long as 'neath the Kalka hills
The tonga-horn shall ring,
So long as down the Solon dip
The hard-held ponies swing,
So long as Tara Devi sees
The lights o' Simla town,
So long as Pleasure calls us up,
And duty drives us down,
If you love me as I love you,
What pair so happy as we two?

So long as Aces take the King,
Or backers take the bet,
So long as debt leads men to wed,
Or marriage leads to debt,
So long as little luncheons, Love,
And scandal hold their vogue,
While there is sport at Annandale
Or whiskey at Jutogh,
If you love me as I love you,
What knife can cut our love in two?

So long as down the rocking floor
The raving polka spins,
So long as Kitchen Lancers spur
The maddened violins,
So long as through the whirling smoke
We hear the oft-told tale:
"Twelve hundred in the Lotteries,"
And *Whatshername* for sale?
If you love me as I love you,
We'll play the game and win it too.

So long as Lust or Lucre tempt
Straight riders from the course,
So long as with each drink we pour
Black brewage of Remorse,
So long as those unloaded guns
We keep beside the bed
Blow off, by obvious accident,
The lucky owner's head,
If you love me as I love you,
What can Life kill or Death undo?

So long as Death 'twixt dance and dance
Chills best and bravest blood,
And drops the reckless rider down
The rotten, rain-soaked *khud,*

So long as rumors from the North
Make loving wives afraid,
So long as Burma takes the boy
And typhoid kills the maid,
If you love me as I love you,
What knife can cut our love in two?

By all that lights our daily life
Or works our lifelong woe,
From Boileaugunge to Simla Downs
And those grim glades below,
Where, heedless of the flying hoof
And clamor overhead,
Sleep, with the grey langur for guard,
Our very scornful Dead,
If you love me as I love you,
All Earth is servant to us two?

By Docket, Billetdoux, and File,
By Mountain, Cliff, and Fir,
By Fan and Sword and Office-box,
By Corset, Plume, and Spur,
By Riot, Revel, Waltz, and War,
By Women, Work, and Bills,
By all the life that fizzes in
The everlasting Hills,
If you love me as I love you
What pair so happy as we two?

CERTAIN MAXIMS OF HAFIZ

I.

If It be pleasant to look on, stalled in the packed *serai,*
Does not the Young Man try Its temper and pace ere he buy?
If She be pleasant to look on, what does the Young Man say?
"Lo! She is pleasant to look on, give Her to me to-day!"

II.

Yea, though a Kafir die, to him is remitted Jehannum
If he borrowed in life from a native at sixty per cent. per annum.

III.

Blister we not for *bursati?* So when the heart is vexed,
The pain of one maiden's refusal is drowned in the pain of the next.

IV.

The temper of chums, the love of your wife,
and a new piano's tune—
Which of the three will you trust at the end
of an Indian June?

V.

Who are the rulers of Ind—to whom shall we
bow the knee?
Make your peace with the women, and men
will make you L. G.

VI.

Does the woodpecker flit round the young *fer-ash?* Does grass clothe a new-built wall?
Is she under thirty, the woman who holds a
boy in her thrall?

VII.

If She grow suddenly gracious—reflect. Is it
all for thee?
The black-buck is stalked through the bullock,
and Man through jealousy.

VIII.

Seek not for favor of women. So shall you find it indeed.
Does not the boar break cover just when you're lighting a weed?

IX.

If He play, being young and unskilful, for shekels of silver and gold,
Take His money, my son, praising Allah. The kid was ordained to be sold.

X.

With a "weed" among men or horses verily this is the best,
That you work him in office or dog-cart lightly —but give him no rest.

XI.

Pleasant the snaffle of Courtship, improving the manners and carriage;
But the colt who is wise will abstain from the terrible thorn-bit of Marriage.

XII.

As the thriftless gold of the *babul,* so is the gold that we spend
On a Derby Sweep, or our neighbor's wife, or the horse that we buy from a friend.

XIII.

The ways of man with a maid be strange, yet simple and tame
To the ways of a man with a horse, when selling or racing that same.

XIV.

In public Her face turneth to thee, and pleasant Her smile when ye meet.
It is ill. The cold rocks of El-Gidar smile thus on the waves at their feet.
In public Her face is averted, with anger She nameth thy name.
It is well. Was there ever a loser content with the loss of the game?

XV.

If She have spoken a word, remember thy lips are sealed,
And the Brand of the Dog is upon him by whom is the secret revealed.

If She have written a letter, delay not an instant, but burn it,
Tear it in pieces, O Fool, and the wind to her mate shall return it!
If there be trouble to Herward, and a lie of the blackest can clear,
Lie, while thy lips can move or a man is alive to hear.

XVI.

My Son, if a maiden deny thee and scuffingly bid thee give o'er,
Yet lip meets with lip at the lastward—get out! She has been there before.
They are pecked on the ear and the chin and the nose who are lacking in lore.

XVII.

If we fall in the race, though we win, the hoof-slide is scarred on the course.
Though Allah and Earth pardon Sin, remaineth forever Remorse.

XVIII.

"By all I am misunderstood!" if the Matron shall say, or the Maid:
"Alas! I do not understand," my son, be thou nowise afraid.
In vain in the sight of the Bird is the net of the Fowler displayed.

XIX.

My son, if I, Hafiz, thy father, take hold of thy knees in my pain,
Demanding thy name on stamped paper, one day or one hour—refrain.
Are the links of thy fetters so light that thou cravest another man's chain?

THE GRAVE OF THE HUNDRED HEAD

There's a widow in sleepy Chester
Who weeps for her only son;
There's a grave on the Pabeng River,
A grave that the Burmans shun,
And there's Subadar Prag Tewarri
Who tells how the work was done.

A SNIDER squibbed in the jungle,
Somebody laughed and fled,
And the men of the First Shikaris
Picked up their Subaltern dead,
With a big blue mark in his forehead
And the back blown out of his head.

Subadar Prag Tewarri,
Jemadar Hira Lal,
Took command of the party,
Twenty rifles in all,
Marched them down to the river
As the day was beginning to fall.

They buried the boy by the river,
A blanket over his face—
They wept for their dead lieutenant,
The men of an alien race—
They made a *samádh* in his honor,
A mark for his resting-place.

For they swore by the Holy Water,
They swore by the salt they ate,
That the soul of Lieutenant Eshmitt Sahib
Should go to his God in state;
With fifty file of Burman
To open him Heaven's gate.

The men of the First Shikaris
Marched till the break of day,
Till they came to the rebel village,
The village of Pabengmay—
A *jingal* covered the clearing,
Calthrops hampered the way.

Subadar Prag Tewarri,
Bidding them load with ball,
Halted a dozen rifles
Under the village wall;
Sent out a flanking-party
With Jemadar Hira Lal.

The men of the First Shikaris
  Shouted and smote and slew,
Turning the grinning *jingal*
  On to the howling crew.
The Jemadar's flanking-party
  Butchered the folk who flew.

Long was the morn of slaughter,
  Long was the list of slain,
Five score heads were taken,
  Five score heads and twain;
And the men of the First Shikaris
  Went back to their grave again,

Each man bearing a basket
  Red as his palms that day,
Red as the blazing village—
  The village Pabengmay.
And the *"drip-drip-drip"* from the baskets
  Reddened the grass by the way.

They made a pile of their trophies
  High as a tall man's chin,
Head upon head distorted,
  Set in a sightless grin,
Anger and pain and terror
  Stamped on the smoke-scorched skin.

Subadar Prag Tewarri
Put the head of the Boh
On the top of the mound of triumph,
The head of his son below,
With the sword and the peacock-banner
That the world might behold and know.

Thus the *samádh* was perfect,
Thus was the lesson plain
Of the wrath of the First Shikaris—
The price of a white man slain;
And the men of the First Shikaris
Went back into camp again.

Then a silence came to the river,
A hush fell over the shore,
And Bohs that were brave departed,
And Sniders squibbed no more;
For the Burmans said
That a *kullah's* head
Must be paid for with heads five score.

There's a widow in sleepy Chester
Who weeps for her only son;
There's a grave on the Pabeng River,
A grave that the Burmans shun,
And there's Subadar Prag Tewarri
Who tells how the work was done.

THE MOON OF OTHER DAYS

BENEATH the deep veranda's shade,
When bats begin to fly,
I sit me down and watch—alas!—
Another evening die.
Blood-red behind the sere *ferash*
She rises through the haze.
Sainted Diana! can that be
The Moon of Other Days?

Ah! shade of little Kitty Smith,
Sweet Saint of Kensington!
Say, was it ever thus at Home
The Moon of August shone,
When arm in arm we wandered long
Through Putney's evening haze,
And Hammersmith was Heaven beneath
The Moon of Other Days?

But Wandle's stream is Sutlej now,
And Putney's evening haze
The dust that half a hundred kine
Before my window raise.

Unkempt, unclean, athwart the mist
The seething city looms,
In place of Putney's golden gorse
The sickly *babul* blooms.

Glare down, old Hecate, through the dust,
And bid the pie-dog yell,
Draw from the drain its typhoid-germ,
From each bazaar its smell;
Yea, suck the fever from the tank
And sap my strength therewith:
Thank Heaven, you show a smiling face
To little Kitty Smith!

THE OVERLAND MAIL

(*Foot-Service to the Hills*)

In the name of the Empress of India, make way,
O Lords of the Jungle, wherever you roam.
The woods are astir at the close of the day—
We exiles are waiting for letters from Home.
Let the robber retreat—let the tiger turn tail—
In the Name of the Empress, the Overland Mail!

With a jingle of bells as the dusk gathers in,
He turns to the foot-path that heads up the hill—
The bags on his back and a cloth round his chin,
And, tucked in his waist-belt, the Post Office bill:
"Despatched on this date, as received by the rail,
Per runner, two bags of the Overland Mail."

Is the torrent in spate? He must ford it or swim.
Has the rain wrecked the road? He must climb by the cliff.
Does the tempest cry "Halt"? What are tempests to him?
The Service admits not a "but" or an "if."
While the breath's in his mouth, he must bear without fail,
In the Name of the Empress, the Overland Mail.

From aloe to rose-oak, from rose-oak to fir,
From level to upland, from upland to crest,
From rice-field to rock-ridge, from rock-ridge to spur,
Fly the soft sandalled feet, strains the brawny brown chest.
From rail to ravine—to the peak from the vale—
Up, up through the night goes the Overland Mail.

There's a speck on the hillside, a dot on the road—
A jingle of bells on the foot-path below—
There's a scuffle above in the monkey's abode—

The world is awake, and the clouds are aglow.
For the great Sun himself must attend to the hail:
"In the name of the Empress, the Overland Mail!"

WHAT THE PEOPLE SAID

(*June 21st,* 1887)

By the well, where the bullocks go
Silent and blind and slow—
By the field where the young corn dies
In the face of the sultry skies,
They have heard, as the dull Earth hears
The voice of the wind of an hour,
The sound of the Great Queen's voice:
"My God hath given me years,
Hath granted dominion and power:
And I bid you, O Land, rejoice."

And the ploughman settles the share
More deep in the grudging clod;
For he saith: "The wheat is my care,
And the rest is the will of God.
He sent the Mahratta spear
As He sendeth the rain,
And the *Mlech,* in the fated year,
Broke the spear in twain,
And was broken in turn. Who knows
How our Lords make strife?
It is good that the young wheat grows,
For the bread is Life."

Then, far and near, as the twilight drew,
  Hissed up to the scornful dark
Great serpents, blazing, of red and blue,
That rose and faded, and rose anew,
  That the Land might wonder and mark
"To-day is a day of days," they said,
"Make merry, O People, all!"
And the Ploughman listened and bowed his
    head:
"To-day and to-morrow God's will," he said,
As he trimmed the lamps on the wall.

"He sendeth us years that are good,
As He sendeth the dearth.
He giveth to each man his food,
Or Her food to the Earth.
Our Kings and our Queens are afar—
On their peoples be peace—
God bringeth the rain to the Bar,
That our catle increase."

And the Ploughman settled the share
More deep in the sun-dried clod:
"Mogul, Mahratta, and *Mlech* from the North,
And White Queen over the Seas—
God raiseth them up and driveth them forth
As the dust of the ploughshare flies in the
    breeze;
But the wheat and the cattle are all my care,
And the rest is the will of God."

THE UNDERTAKER'S HORSE

"To-tschin-shu is condemned to death. How can he drink tea with the Executioner?"—*Japanese Proverb.*

The eldest son bestrides him,
And the pretty daughter rides him,
And I meet him oft o' mornings on the Course;
And there wakens in my bosom
An emotion chill and gruesome
As I canter past the Undertaker's Horse.

Neither shies he nor is restive,
But a hideously suggestive
Trot, professional and placid, he affects;
And the cadence of his hoof-beats
To my mind, this grim reproof beats:
"Mend your pace, my friend, I'm coming.
Who's the next?"

Ah! stud-bred of ill-omen,
I have watched the strongest go—men
Of pith and might and muscle—at your heels
Down the plantain-bordered highway,
(Heaven send it ne'er be my way!)
In a lacquered box and jetty upon wheels.

Answer, sombre beast and dreary,
Where is Brown, the young and cheery,
Smith, the pride of all his friends and half the Force?
You were at that last dread *dak*
We must cover at a walk,
Bring them back to me, O Undertaker's Horse!

With your mane unhogged and flowing,
And your curious way of going,
And that business-like black crimping of your tail,
E'en with Beauty on your back, sir,
Pacing as a lady's hack, sir,
What wonder when I meet you I turn pale?

It may be you wait your time, Beast,
Till I write my last bad rhyme, Beast,
Quit the sunlight, cut the rhyming, drop the glass,
Follow after with the others,
Where some dusky heathen smothers
Us with marigolds in lieu of English grass.

Or, perchance, in years to follow,
I shall watch your plump sides hollow,
See Carnifex (gone lame) become a corse.
See old age at last o'erpower you,
And the Station Pack devour you,
I shall chuckle then, O Undertaker's Horse!

But to insult, gibe, and quest, I've
Still the hideously suggestive
Trot that hammers out the grim and warning
text,
And I hear it hard behind me,
In what place soe'er I find me:
"Sure to catch you sooner or later. Who's
the next?"

THE FALL OF JOCK GILLESPIE

THIS fell when dinner-time was done—
'Twixt the first an' the second rub—
That oor mon Jock cam' hame again
To his rooms ahint the Club.

An' syne he laughed, an' syne he sang,
An' syne we thoct him fou,
An' syne he trumped his partner's trick,
An' garred his partner rue.

Then up and spake an elder mon,
That held the Spade its Ace—
"God save the lad! Whence comes the lick
That wimples on his face?"

An' Jock he sniggered, an' Jock he smiled,
An' ower the card-brim wunk:
"I'm a' too fresh fra' the stirrup-peg,
May be that I am drunk."

"There's whusky brewed in Galashiels,
An' L. L. L. forbye;
But never liquor lit the low
That keeks fra' oot your eye.

"There's a thrid o' hair on your dress-coat
breast,
Aboon the heart a wee?"
"Oh! that is fra' the lang-haired Skye
That slobbers ower me."

"Oh! lang-haired Skyes are lovin' beasts,
An' terrier dogs are fair,
But never yet was terrier born
Wi' ell-lang gowden hair!

"There's a smirch o' pouther on your breast,
Below the left lappel?"
"Oh! that is fra' my auld cigar,
Whenas the stump-end fell."

"Mon Jock, ye smoke the Trichi coarse,
For ye are short o' cash,
An' best Havanas couldna leave
Sae white an' pure an ash.

"This nicht ye stopped a story braid,
An' stopped it wi' a curse—
Last nicht ye told that tale yoursel,
An' capped it wi' a worse!

"Oh! we're no fou! Oh! we're no fou!
But plainly we can ken
Ye're fallin', fallin', fra' the band
O' cantie single men!"

An' it fell when *sirris*-shaws were sere,
An' the nichts were lang and mirk,
In braw new breeks, wi a gowden ring,
Oor Jockie gaed to the Kirk.

ARITHMETIC ON THE FRONTIER

A GREAT and glorious thing it is
To learn, for seven years or so,
The Lord knows what of that and this,
Ere reckoned fit to face the foe—
The flying bullet down the Pass,
That whistles clear: "All flesh is grass."

Three hundred pounds per annum spent
On making brain and body meeter
For all the murderous intent
Comprised in "villanous saltpetre!"
And after—ask the Yusufzaies
What comes of all our 'ologies.

A scrimmage in a Border Station—
A canter down some dark defile—
Two thousand pounds of education
Drops to a ten-rupee *jezail*—
The Crammer's boast, the Squadron's pride,
Shot like a rabbit in a ride!

No proposition Euclid wrote,
  No formulæ the text-books know,
Will turn the bullet from your coat,
  Or ward the tulwar's downward blow.
Strike hard who cares—shoot straight who
    can—
The odds are on the cheaper man.

One sword-knot stolen from the camp
  Will pay for all the school expenses
Of any Kurrum Valley scamp
  Who knows no word or moods and tenses.
But, being blessed with perfect sight,
Picks off our messmates left and right.

With home-bred hordes the hillsides teem,
  The troop-ships bring us one by one,
At vast expense of time and steam,
  To slay Afridis where they run.
The "captives of our bow and spear"
Are cheap—alas! as we are dear.

ONE VICEROY RESIGNS

(*Lord Dufferin to Lord Lansdowne*)

So here's your Empire. No more wine, then?
Good.
We'll clear the Aides and *khitmatgars* away.
(You'll know that fat old fellow with the knife—
He keeps the Name Book, talks in English too,
And almost thinks himself the Government.)
O Youth, Youth, Youth! Forgive me, you're so young.
Forty from sixty—twenty years of work
And power to back the working. *Ay de mi!*
You want to know, you want to see, to touch,
And, by your lights, to act. It's natural.
I wonder can I help you. Let me try.
You saw—what did you see from Bombay east?
Enough to frighten any one but me?
Neat that! It frightened Me in Eighty-Four!
You shouldn't take a man from Canada
And bid him smoke in powder-magazines;
Nor with a Reputation such as—Bah!

That ghost has haunted me for twenty years,
My Reputation now full blown—Your fault—
Yours, with your stories of the strife at Home,
Who's up, who's down, who leads and who is led—
One reads so much, one hears so little here.
Well, now's your turn of exile. I go back
To Rome and leisure. All roads lead to Rome,
Or books—the refuge of the destitute.
When you . . . that brings me back to India. See!
Start clear. I couldn't. Egypt served my turn.
You'll never plumb the Oriental mind,
And if you did it isn't worth the toil.
Think of a sleek French priest in Canada;
Divide by twenty half-breeds. Multiply
By twice the Sphinx's silence. There's your East,
And you're as wise as ever. So am I.
Accept on trust and work in darkness, strike
At venture, stumble forward, make your mark,
(It's chalk on granite), then thank God no flame
Leaps from the rock to shrivel mark and man.
I'm clear—my mark is made. Three months of drought
Had ruined much. It rained and washed away

The specks that might have gathered on my Name.
I took a country twice the size of France,
And shuttered up one doorway in the North.
I stand by those. You'll find that both will pay,
I pledged my Name on both—they're yours to-night.
Hold to them—they hold fame enough for two.
I'm old, but I shall live till Burma pays.
Men there—*not* German traders—Cr-sthw-te knows—
You'll find it in my papers. For the North
Guns always—quietly—but always guns.
You've seen your Council? Yes, they'll try to rule,
And prize their Reputations. Have you met
A grim lay-reader with a taste for coins,
And faith in Sin most men withhold from God?
He's gone to England. R-p-n knew his grip
And kicked. A Council always has its H-pes.
They look for nothing from the West but Death
Or Bath or Bournemouth. Here's their ground.
They fight
Until the middle classes take them back,

One of ten millions plus a C. S. I.
Or drop in harness. Legion of the Lost?
Not altogether—earnest, narrow men,
But chiefly earnest, and they'll do your work,
And end by writing letters to the *Times*.
(Shall *I* write letters, answering H-nt-r—
fawn
With R-p-n on the Yorkshire grocers? Ugh!)
They have their Reputations. Look to one—
I work with him—the smallest of them all,
White-haired, red-faced, who sat the plunging
horse
Out in the garden. He's your right-hand man,
And dreams of tilting W-ls-y from the throne,
But while he dreams gives work we cannot
buy;
He has his Reputation—wants the Lords
By way of Frontier Roads. Meantime, I
think,
He values very much the hand that falls
Upon his shoulder at the Council table—
Hates cats and knows his business: *which is
yours.*
Your business! Twice a hundred million
souls.
Your business! I could tell you what I did
Some nights of Eighty-Five, at Simla, worth
A Kingdom's ransom. When a big ship drives,

God knows to what new reef the man at the wheel
Prays with the passengers. They lose their lives,
Or rescued go their way; but he's no man
To take his trick at the wheel again—that's worse
Than drowning. Well, a galled Mashobra mule
(You'll see Mashobra) passed me on the Mall,
And I was—some fool's wife had ducked and bowed
To show the others I would stop and speak.
Then the mule fell—three galls, a hand-breadth each,
Behind the withers. Mrs. Whatsisname
Leers at the mule and me by turns, thweet thoul!
"How could they make him carry such a load!"
I saw—it isn't often I dream dreams—
More than the mule that minute—smoke and flame
From Simla to the haze below. That's weak.
Your're younger. You'll dream dreams before you've done.
You've youth, that's one—good workmen—that means two
Fair chances in your favor. Fate's the third.

I know what *I* did. Do you ask me, "Preach"?
I answer by my past or else go back
To platitudes of rule—or take you thus
In confidence and say: "You know the trick:
You've governed Canada. You know. *You* know!"
And all the while commend you to Fate's hand
(Here at the top one loses sight o' God),
Commend you, then, to something more than you—
The Other People's blunders and . . . that's all.
I'd agonize to serve you if I could.
It's incommunicable, like the cast
That drops the tackle with the gut adry.
Too much—too little—there's your salmon lost!
And so I tell you nothing—wish you luck,
And wonder—how I wonder!—for your sake
And triumph for my own. You're young, you're young,
You hold to half a hundred Shibboleths.
I'm old. I followed Power to the last,
Gave her my best, and Power followed Me.
It's worth it—on my soul I'm speaking plain,
Here by the claret glasses!—worth it all.
I gave—no matter what I gave—I win.
I *know* I win. Mine's work, good work that live!

A country twice the size of France—the North
Safeguarded. That's my record: sink the rest
And better if you can. The Rains may serve,
Rupees may rise—three pence will give you Fame—
It's rash to hope for sixpence—If they rise
Get guns, more guns, and lift the salt-tax. Oh!
I told you what the Congress meant or thought?
I'll answer nothing. Half a year will prove
The full extent of time and thought you'll spare
To Congress. Ask a Lady Doctor *once*
How little Begums see the light—deduce
Thence how the True Reformer's child is born.
It's interesting, curious . . . and vile.
I told the Turk he was a gentleman.
I told the Russian that his Tartar veins
Bled pure Parisian ichor; and he purred.
The Congress doesn't purr. I think it swears.
You're young—you'll swear too ere you've reached the end.
The End! God help you, if there be a God.
(There must be one to startle Gl-dst-ne's soul
In that new land where all the wires are cut,
And Cr-ss snores anthems on the asphodel.)
God help you! And I'd help you if I could,

But that's beyond me. Yes, your speech was crude.
Sound claret after olives—yours and mine;
But Medoc slips into vin ordinaire.
(I'll drink my first at Genoa to your health.)
Raise it to Hock. You'll never catch my style.
And, after all, the middle-classes grip
The middle-class—for Brompton talk Earl's Court.
Perhaps you're right. I'll see you in the *Times*—
A quarter-column of eye-searing print,
A leader once a quarter—then a war;
The Strand abellow through the fog: "Defeat!"
" 'Orrible slaughter!" While you lie awake
And wonder. Oh, you'll wonder ere you're free!
I wonder now. The four years slide away
So fast, so fast, and leave me here alone.
R—y, C-lv-n, L—l, R-b-rts, B-ch, the rest,
Princes and Powers of Darkness, troops and trains,
(I *cannot* sleep in trains) land piled on land,
Whitewash and weariness, red rockets, dust,
White snows that mocked me, palaces—with draughts,
And W-stl-nd with the drafts he couldn't pay,
Poor W-ls-n reading his obituary

Before he died, and H-pe, the man with bones,
And A-tch-s-n a dripping mackintosh
At Council in the Rains, his grating "Sirrr"
Half drowned by H-nt-r's silky: "Bát my lahd."
Hunterian always: M-rsh-l spinning plates
Or standing on his head; the Rent Bill's roar,
A hundred thousand speeches, much red cloth,
And Smiths thrice happy if I call them Jones,
(I can't remember half their names) or reined
My pony on the Mall to greet their wives.
More trains, more troops, more dust, and then all's done.
Four years, and I forget. If I forget
How will *they* bear me in their minds? The North
Safeguarded—nearly (R-b-rts knows the rest),
A country twice the size of France annexed.
That stays at least. The rest may pass—may pass—
Your heritage—and I can teach you nought.
"High trust," "vast honor," "interests twice as vast,"
"Due reverence to your Council"—keep to those.
I envy you the twenty years you've gained,
But not the five to follow. What's that? One?
Two!—Surely not so late. Good-night. *Don't* dream.

THE BETROTHED

"You must choose between me and your cigar."

OPEN the old cigar-box, get me a Cuba stout,
For things are running crossways, and Maggie and I are out.

We quarreled about Havanas—we fought o'er a good cheroot,
And I know she is exacting, and she says I am a brute.

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider a space;
In the soft blue veil of the vapor, musing on Maggie's face.

Maggie is pretty to look at—Maggie's a loving lass,
But the prettiest cheeks must wrinkle, the truest of loves must pass.

There's peace in a Laranaga, there's calm in a Henry Clay,
But the best cigar in an hour is finished and thrown away—

Thrown away for another as perfect and ripe
and brown—
But I could not throw away Maggie for fear
o' the talk o' the town!

Maggie, my wife at fifty—grey and dour and
old—
With never another Maggie to purchase for
love or gold!

And the light of Days that have Been the dark
of the Days that Are,
And Love's torch stinking and stale, like the
butt of a dead cigar—

The butt of a dead cigar you are bound to
keep in your pocket—
With never a new one to light tho' it's charred
and black to the socket.

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider a
while—
Here is a mild Manilla—there is a wifely
smile.

Which is the better portion—bondage bought
with a ring,
Or a harem of dusky beauties fifty tied in a
string?

Counsellors cunning and silent—comforters
true and tried,
And never a one of the fifty to sneer at a rival
bride.

Thought in the early morning, solace in time
of woes
Peace in the hush of the twilight, balm ere
my eyelids close.

This will the fifty give me, asking nought in
return,
With only a *Suttee's* passion—to do their duty
and burn.

This will the fifty give me. When they are
spent and dead,
Five times other fifties shall be my servants
instead.

The furrows of far-off Java, the isles of the
Spanish Main,
When they hear my harem is empty, will send
me my brides again.

I will take no heed to their raiment, nor food
for their mouths withal,
So long as the gulls are nesting, so long as the
showers fall.

I will scent 'em with best vanilla, with tea will
I temper their hides,
And the Moor and the Mormon shall envy
who read of the tale of my brides.

For Maggie has written a letter to give me my
choice between
The wee little whimpering Love and the great
god Nick o' Teen.

And I have been servant of Love for barely a
twelvemonth clear,
But I have been Priest of Partagas a matter
of seven year;

And the gloom of my bachelor days is flecked
with the cheery light
Of stumps that I burned to Friendship and
Pleasure and Work and Fight.

And I turn my eyes to the future that Maggie
and I must prove,
But the only light on the marshes is the Will-
o'-the-Wisp of Love.

Will it see me safe through my journey, or
leave me bogged in the mire?
Since a puff of tobacco can cloud it, shall I
follow the fitful fire?

Open the old cigar-box — let me consider anew—
Old friends, and who is Maggie that I should abandon *you?*

A million surplus Maggies are willing to bear the yoke;
And a woman is only a woman, but a good cigar is a Smoke.

Light me another Cuba; I hold to my first-sworn vows,
If Maggie will have no rival, I'll have no Maggie for spouse!

Bolles
'97

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

WHERE the sober-colored cultivator smiles
On his *byles;*
Where the cholera, the cyclone, and the crow
Come and go;
Where the merchant deals in indigo and tea,
Hides and *ghi;*
Where the Babu drops inflammatory hints
In his prints;
Stands a City—Charnock chose it—packed away
Near a Bay—
By the sewage rendered fetid, by the sewer
Made impure,
By the Sunderbunds unwholesome, by the swamp
Moist and damp;
And the City and the Viceroy, as we see,
Don't agree.
Once, two hundred years ago, the trader came
Meek and tame.
Where his timid foot first halted, there he stayed,
Till mere trade
Grew to Empire, and he sent his armies forth
South and North

Till the country from Peshawur to Ceylon
Was his own.
Thus the midday halt of Charnock—more's the pity!
Grew a City.
As the fungus sprouts chaotic from its bed,
So it spread—
Chance-directed, chance-erected, laid and built
On the silt—
Palace, byre, hovel—poverty and pride—
Side by side;
And, above the packed and pestilential town,
Death looked down.
But the Rulers in that City by the Sea
Turned to flee—
Fled, with each returning spring-tide from its ills
To the Hills.
From the clammy fogs of morning, from the blaze
Of the days,
From the sickness of the noontide, from the heat,
Beat retreat;
For the country from Peshawur to Ceylon
Was their own.
But the Merchant risked the perils of the Plain
For his gain.

Now the resting-place of Charnock, 'neath the palms,
Asks an alms,
And the burden of its lamentation is.
Briefly, this:
"Because, for certain months, we boil and stew,
So should you.
Cast the Viceroy and his Council, to perspire
In our fire!"
And for answer to the argument, in vain
We explain
That an amateur Saint Lawrence cannot fry;
"*All* must fry!"
That the Merchant risks the perils of the Plain
For his gain.
Nor can Rulers rule a house that men grow rich in,
From its kitchen.

Let the Babu drop inflammatory hints
In his prints;
And mature — consistent soul — his plan for stealing
To Darjeeling;
Let the Merchant seek, who makes his silver pile,
England's isle;

Let the City Charnock pitched on — evil day!—
Go Her way.
Though the argosies of Asia at Her doors
Heap their stores,
Though Her enterprise and energy secure
Income sure,
Though "out-station orders punctually obeyed"
Swell Her trade—
Still, for rule, administration, and the rest,
Simla's best.

GRIFFEN'S DEBT

IMPRIMIS he was "broke." Thereafter left
His regiment, and, later, took to drink;
Then, having lost the balance of his friends,
"Went Fantee"—joined the people of the land,
Turned three parts Mussulman and one Hindu
And lived among the Gauri villagers,
Who gave him shelter and a wife or twain,
And boasted that a thorough, full-blood *sahib*
Had come among them. Thus he spent his time,
Deeply indebted to the village *shroff*,
(Who never asked for payment) always drunk,
Unclean, abominable, out-at-heels;
Forgetting that he was an Englishman.

You know they dammed the Gauri with a dam,
And all the good contractors scamped their work,

And all the bad material at hand
Was used to dam the Gauri—which was cheap
And, therefore, proper. Then the Gauri burst,
And several hundred thousand cubic tons
Of water dropped into the valley, *flop,*
And drowned some five and twenty villagers,
And did a lakh or two of detriment
To crops and cattle. When the flood went down
We found him dead, beneath an old dead horse,
Full six miles down the valley. So we said
He was a victim to the Demon Drink,
And moralized upon him for a week,
And then forgot him. Which was natural.

But, in the valley of the Gauri, men
Beneath the shadow of the big new dam
Relate a foolish legend of the flood,
Accounting for the little loss of life
(Only those five and twenty villagers)
In this wise: On the evening of the flood,
They heard the groaning of the rotten dam,
And voices of the Mountain Devils. Then
An incarnation of the local God,
Mounted upon a monster-neighing horse,
And flourishing a flail-like whip, came down,
Breathing ambrosia, to the villages,

And fell upon the simple villagers
With yells beyond the power of mortal throat,
And blows beyond the power of mortal hand,
And smote them with the flail-like whip, and drove
Them clamorous with terror up the hill,
And scattered, with the monster-neighing steed,
Their crazy cottages about their ears,
And generally cleared those villages.
Then came the water, and the local God,
Breathing ambrosia, flourishing his whip,
And mounted on his monster-neighing steed,
Went down the valley with the flying trees
And residue of homesteads, while they watched
Safe on the mountain-side these wondrous things,
And knew that they were much beloved of Heaven.
Wherefore, and when the dam was newly built,
They raised a temple to the local God,
And burned all manner of unsavory things
Upon his altar, and created priests,
And blew into a conch, and banged a bell,
And told the story of the Gauri flood
With circumstance and much embroidery.

So he the whiskified Objectionable,
Unclean, abominable, out-at-heels,
Became the tutelary Deity
Of all the Gauri valley villages;
And may in time become a Solar Myth.

IN SPRINGTIME

My garden blazes brightly with the rosebush and the peach,
And the *köil* sings above it, in the *siris* by the well,
From the creeper-covered trellis comes the squirrel's chattering speech,
And the blue-jay screams and flutters where the cheery *sat-bhai* dwell.
But the rose has lost its fragrance, and the *köil's* note is strange;
I am sick of endless sunshine, sick of blossom-burdened bough.
Give me back the leafless woodlands where the winds of Springtime range--
Give me back one day in England, for it's Spring in England now!
Through the pines the gusts are booming, o'er the brown fields blowing chill,
From the furrow of the ploughshare streams the fragrance of the loam,
And the hawk nests on the cliff-side and the jackdaw in the hill,
And my heart is back in England mid the sights and sounds of Home.

But the garland of the sacrifice this wealth of
rose and peach is;
Ah! *köil,* little *köil,* singing on the *siris*
bough,
In my ears the knell of exile your ceaseless
bell-like speech is—
Can *you* tell me aught of England or of
Spring in England now?

TWO MONTHS

IN JUNE

No hope, no change! The clouds have shut us in
And through the cloud the sullen Sun strikes down
Full on the bosom of the tortured Town.
Till Night falls heavy as remembered sin
That will not suffer sleep or thought of ease.
And, hour on hour, the dry-eyed Moon in spite
Glares through the haze and mocks with watery light
The torment of the uncomplaining trees.

Far off, the Thunder bellows her despair
To echoing Earth, thrice parched. The lightnings
In vain. No help the heaped-up clouds afford,
But wearier weight of burdened, burning air.
What truce with Dawn? Look, from the aching sky,
Day stalks, a tyrant with a flaming sword!

IN SEPTEMBER

At dawn there was a murmur in the trees,
A ripple on the tank, and in the air
Presage of coming coolness—everywhere
A voice of prophecy upon the breeze.
Up leaped the sun and smote the dust to gold,
And strove to parch anew the heedless land,
All impotently, as a King grown old
Wars for the Empire crumbling 'neath his hand.

One by one, the lotus-petals fell,
Beneath the onslaught of the rebel year
In mutiny against a furious sky;
And far-off Winter whispered: "It is well!
Hot Summer dies. Behold your help is near,
For when men's need is sorest, then come I."

THE GALLEY-SLAVE

Oh, gallant was our galley from her carven steering-wheel
To her figurehead of silver and her beak of hammered steel;
The leg-bar chafed the ankle, and we gasped for cooler air,
But no galley on the water with our galley could compare!

Our bulkheads bulged with cotton and our masts were stepped in gold—
We ran a mighty merchandise of niggers in the hold;
The white foam spun behind us, and the black shark swam below,
As we gripped the kicking sweep-head and we made that galley go.

It was merry in the galley, for we revelled now and then—
If they wore us down like cattle, faith, we fought and loved like men!

As we snatched her through the water, so we
snatched a minute's bliss,
And the mutter of the dying never spoiled the
lovers' kiss.

Our women and our children toiled beside us
in the dark—
They died, we filed their fetters, and we
heaved them to the shark—
We heaved them to the fishes, but so fast the
galley sped,
We had only time for envy, for we could not
mourn our dead.

Bear witness, once my comrades, what a hard-
bit gang were we—
The servants of the sweep-head, but the mas-
ters of the sea!
By the hands that drove her forward as she
plunged and yawed and sheered,
Woman, Man, or God or Devil, was there
anything we feared?

Was it storm? Our fathers faced it, and a
wilder never blew;
Earth that waited for the wreckage watched
the galley struggle through.

Burning noon or choking midnight, Sickness,
Sorrow, Parting, Death?
Nay, our very babes would mock you, had
they time for idle breath.

But to-day I leave the galley, and another
takes my place;
There's my name upon the deck-beam—let it
stand a little space.
I am free—to watch my messmates beating
out to open main,
Free of all that Life can offer—save to handle
sweep again.

By the brand upon my shoulder, by the gall of
clinging steel,
By the welt the whips have left me, by the
scars that never heal;
By eyes grown old with staring through the
sun-wash on the brine,
I am paid in full for service—would that ser-
vice still were mine!

Yet they talk of times and seasons and of woe
the years bring forth,
Of our galley swamped and shattered in the
rollers of the North.

When the niggers break the hatches, and the decks are gay with gore,
And a craven-hearted pilot crams her crashing on the shore.

She will need no half-mast signal, minute-gun, or rocket-flare,
When the cry for help goes seaward, she will find her servants there.
Battered chain-gangs of the orlop, grizzled drafts of years gone by,
To the bench that broke their manhood, they shall lash themselves and die.

Hale and crippled, young and aged, paid, deserted, shipped away—
Palace, cot, and lazaretto shall make up the tale that day,
When the skies are black above them, and the decks ablaze beneath,
And the top-men clear the raffle with their clasp-knives in their teeth.

It may be that Fate will give me life and leave to row once more—
Set some strong man free for fighting as I take awhile his oar.
But to-day I leave the galley. Shall I curse her service then?
God be thanked—whate'er comes after, I have lived and toiled with Men!

L'ENVOI

(To whom it may concern)

THE smoke upon your Altar dies,
  The flowers decay,
The Goddess of your sacrifice
Has flown away.
What profit then to sing or slay
The sacrifice from day to day?

"We know the Shrine is void," they said,
  "The Goddess flown—
Yet wreaths are on the Altar laid—
  The Altar-Stone
Is black with fumes of sacrifice,
Albeit She has fled our eyes.

"For, it may be, if still we sing
  And tend the Shrine,
Some Deity on wandering wing
  May there incline;
And, finding all in order meet,
Stay while we worship at Her feet."

THE CONUNDRUM OF THE WORKSHOPS

When the flush of a newborn sun fell first on
Eden's green and gold,
Our father Adam sat under the Tree and
scratched with a stick in the mould;
And the first rude sketch that the world had
seen was joy to his mighty heart,
Till the Devil whispered behind the leaves:
"It's pretty, but is it art?"

Wherefore he called to his wife, and fled to
fashion his work anew—
The first of his race who cared a fig for the
first, most dread review;
And he left his lore to the use of his sons—
and that was a glorious gain
When the Devil chuckled: "Is it art?" in the
ear of the branded Cain.

They builded a tower to shiver the sky and
wrench the stars apart,
Till the Devil grunted behind the bricks: "It's
striking, but is it art?"
The stone was dropped by the quarry-side,
and the idle derrick swung,
While each man talked of the aims of art,
and each in an alien tongue.

They fought and they talked in the north and
south, they talked and they fought in
the west,
Till the waters rose on the jabbering land, and
the poor Red Clay had rest—
Had rest till the dank blank-canvas dawn
when the dove was preened to start,
And the Devil bubbled below the keel: "It's
human, but is it art?"

The tale is old as the Eden Tree—as new
as the new-cut tooth—
For each man knows ere his lip-thatch grows
he is master of art and truth;
And each man hears as the twilight nears, to
the beat of his dying heart,
The Devil drum on the darkened pane: "You
did it, but was it art?"

We have learned to whittle the Eden Tree to
the shape of a surplice-peg,
We have learned to bottle our parents twain
in the yolk of an addled egg,
We know that the tail must wag the dog, as
the horse is drawn by the cart;
But the Devil whoops, as he whooped of old:
"It's clever, but is it art?"

When the flicker of London sun falls faint on
the club-room's green and gold,
The sons of Adam sit them down and scratch
with their pens in the mould—
They scratch with pens in the mould of their
graves, and the ink and the anguish start
When the Devil mutters behind the leaves:
"It's pretty, but is it art?"

Now, if we could win to the Eden Tree where
the four great rivers flow,
And the wreath of Eve is red on the turf as
she left it long ago,
And if we could come when the sentry slept,
and softly scurry through,
By the favor of God we might know as much
—as our father Adam knew.

THE EXPLANATION

Love and Death once ceased their strife
At the Tavern of Man's Life.
Called for wine, and threw—alas!—
Each his quiver on the grass.
When the bout was o'er they found
Mingled arrows strewed the ground.
Hastily they gathered then
Each the loves and lives of men.
Ah, the fateful dawn deceived!
Mingled arrows each one sheaved:
Death's dread armory was stored
With the shafts he most abhorred:
Love's light quiver groaned beneath
Venom-headed darts of Death.
Thus it was they wrought our woe
At the Tavern long ago.
Tell me, do our masters know,
Loosing blindly as they fly,
Old men love while young men die?

THE GIFT OF THE SEA

THE dead child lay in the shroud,
And the widow watched beside;
And her mother slept, and the Channel swept
The gale in the teeth of the tide.

But the widow laughed at all.
"I have lost my man in the sea,
And the child is dead. Be still," she said,
"What more can ye do to me?"

And the widow watched the dead,
And the candle guttered low,
And she tried to sing the Passing Song
That bids the poor soul go.

And "Mary take you now," she sang,
"That lay against my heart."
And "Mary smooth your crib to-night,"
But she could not say "Depart."

Then came a cry from the sea,
But the sea-rime blinded the glass,
And "Heard ye nothing, mother?" she said;
"'Tis the child that waits to pass."

And the nodding mother sighed.
"'Tis a lambing ewe in the whin,
For why should the christened soul cry out,
That never knew of sin?"

"Oh, feet I have held in my hand,
Oh, hands at my heart to catch,
How should they know the road to go,
And how should they lift the latch?"

They laid a sheet to the door,
With the little quilt atop,
That it might not hurt from the cold or the dirt,
But the crying would not stop.

The widow lifted the latch
And strained her eyes to see,
And opened the door on the bitter shore
To let the soul go free.

There was neither glimmer nor ghost,
There was neither spirit nor spark,
And "Heard ye nothing, mother?" she said,
"'Tis crying for me in the dark."

And the nodding mother sighed.
"'Tis sorrow makes ye dull;

Have ye yet to learn the cry of the tern,
  Or the wail of the wind-blown gull?"

"The terns are blown inland,
  The grey gull follows the plough.
'Twas never a bird, the voice I heard,
  O mother, I hear it now!"

"Lie still, dear lamb, lie still;
  The child is passed from harm,
'Tis the ache in your breast that broke your rest,
  And the feel of an empty arm."

She puts her mother aside,
  "In Mary's name let be!
For the peace of my soul I must go," she said,
  And she went to the calling sea.

In the heel of the wind-bit pier,
  Where the twisted weed was piled,
She came to the life she had missed by an hour,
  For she came to a little child.

She laid it into her breast,
  And back to her mother she came,

But it would not feed, and it would not heed,
Though she gave it her own child's name.

And the dead child dripped on her breast,
And her own in the shroud lay stark;
And, "God forgive us, mother," she said,
"We let it die in the dark!"

EVARRA AND HIS GODS

READ *here,*
This is the story of Evarra—man—
Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.
Because the city gave him of her gold,
Because the caravans brought turquoises,
Because his life was sheltered by the King,
So that no man should maim him, none should steal,
Or break his rest with babble in the streets
When he was weary after toil, he made
An image of his God in gold and pearl,
With turquoise diadem and human eyes,
A wonder in the sunshine, known afar
And worshipped by the King; but, drunk with pride,
Because the city bowed to him for God,
He wrote above the shrine: *"Thus Gods are made,*
And whoso makes them otherwise shall die."
And all the city praised him. . . . Then he died.

Read here the story of Evarra—man—
Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.
Because his city had no wealth to give,
Because the caravans were spoiled afar,
Because his life was threatened by the King,
So that all men despised him in the streets,
He hacked the living rock, with sweat and tears,
And reared a God against the morning-gold,
A terror in the sunshine, seen afar,
And worshipped by the King; but, drunk with pride,
Because the city fawned to bring him back,
He carved upon the plinth: *"Thus Gods are made,*
And whoso makes them otherwise shall die."
And all the people praised him. . . .
Then he died.

Read here the story of Evarra—man—
Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.
Because he lived among a simple folk,
Because his village was between the hills,
Because he smeared his cheeks with blood of ewes.
He cut an idol from a fallen pine,

Smeared blood upon its cheeks, and wedged
a shell
Above its brows for eye, and gave it hair
Of trailing moss, and plaited straw for
crown.
And all the village praised him for this
craft,
And brought him butter, honey, milk, and
curds.
Wherefore, because the shoutings drove
him mad,
He scratched upon that log: *"Thus Gods
are made,*
*And whoso makes them otherwise shall
die."*
And all the people praised him. . . .
Then he died.

Read here the story of Evarra—man—
Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.
Because his God decreed one clot of blood
Should swerve a hair's-breadth from the
pulse's path,
And chafe his brain, Evarra mowed alone,
Rag-wrapped, among the cattle in the fields,
Counting his fingers, jesting with the trees,
And mocking at the mist, until his God
Drove him to labor. Out of dung and
horns

Dropped in the mire he made a monstrous
God,
Abhorrent, shapeless, crowned with plain-
tain tufts.
And when the cattle lowed at twilight-time,
He dreamed it was the clamor of lost
crowds,
And howled among the beasts: *"Thus Gods*
are made,
And whoso makes them otherwise shall
die."
Thereat the cattle bellowed. . . . Then
he died.

Yet at the last he came to Paradise,
And found his own four Gods, and that he
wrote;
And marveled, being very near to God,
What oaf on earth had made his toil God's
law,
Till God said, mocking: "Mock not. These
be thine."
Then cried Evarra: "I have sinned!"—
"Not so.
If thou hadst written otherwise, thy Gods
Had rested in the mountain and the mine,
And I were poorer by four wondrous Gods,
And thy more wondrous law, Evarra,
Thine,

Servant of shouting crowds and lowing
kine."
Thereat with laughing mouth, but tear-wet
eyes,
Evarra cast his Gods from Paradise.
This is the story of Evarra—man—
Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.

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